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THE WAR LORDS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

PROPHETS
PRIESTS
AND KINGS

PILLARS OF
SOCIETY

The Kaiser

THE WAR LORDS

BY

A. G. GARDINER

WITH
16 PORTRAITS

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PREFACE TO LIBRARY EDITION

In issuing the present edition of *The War Lords* it is necessary to point out that the book was written during the first nine months of the war and under the varying influence of the events that filled that period. Much has happened since then to qualify the view of those events—the great German advance into Russia, for example, the course of events in the Dardanelles, the intervention of Bulgaria on the side of the enemy, the second fall of Venizelos, the supersession of Sir Ian Hamilton, the heated controversy about conscription, etc. But no attempt has been made to alter the focus in accordance with these later happenings. In so far as the book deals with events it deals with them in a contemporary and not an historic sense, and it has been thought best not to alter that contemporary impression even though it may, in some respects, be no longer just. Moreover, events are only incidental to the main purpose of the book which is an attempt to give an estimate of the personal forces engaged in the struggle, and of their influence upon the origins, issues, and conduct of the war. Whatever the worth of that estimate, it has not been seriously affected by subsequent events. Except for a few minor alterations, therefore, the book appears now in its original form.

Hampstead, *October* 1915.

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THE WAR LORDS

THE KAISER

AND THE ORIGINS OF THE WAR

I. DIVINE RIGHT

It is said, on such high authority that the statement is entitled to respect, that on the fatal Saturday when he signed the declaration of war against Russia the Kaiser, having written his signature, threw the pen across the table and said to the triumphant soldiers around him, "Gentlemen, you will live to regret this." And those who saw the council break up have described how, as he emerged, Count von Moltke made to certain colleagues outside a sign with seven figures indicating the word "Wilhelm." The long struggle was over and the soldiers had dragged their victim over the precipice. That is the general reading of events. But the time has not yet come to ascertain with any clearness the part which the Kaiser played in the drama that preceded the war. Was the Norwegian cruise which was taken after the Serajevo murders a blind intended to lull the suspicions of the outside world, or was it a desperate attempt to escape from the net that the military party had woven around him? What was his action in the interval and what was the precise significance of that message from Sir H. Rumbold to Sir E. Grey, published in the White Paper, referring to the Kaiser's sudden return from Norway? Why was the Berlin Foreign Office alarmed by that

return? On this point there is an incident, told in well-informed circles, that is illuminating. When the Crown Prince heard of the return from Norway he said to one of the military cabal, "William is back; but he is too late." It is the opinion of those in this country most intimate with the inner history of the diplomatic struggle that culminated in the war that both the Kaiser and his chancellor wanted peace, but that the accession of the Crown Prince to the war party made their resistance ineffectual. "Let us be just to Bethmann-Hollweg," said a distinguished Foreign Office representative when the conduct of the chancellor was being criticised. "You only see his failure. We have seen when he has not failed—when he has fought for peace and won. He fought for peace this time, but lost." And so with the Kaiser. The indictment that history will make against him will not be that he wanted war, but that his policy was fatal to the cause of peace. For years he had been increasingly unpopular with the military faction, who regarded him as a coward and as the obstacle to the war which was their dream. There is negative evidence in the Yellow Book that up to August of 1913 he was considered by the French Foreign Office to be an influence for peace. The record there of the memorable interview of the Kaiser and Von Moltke with King Albert comments on the change which was apparent in the attitude of the Kaiser. Hitherto he had commanded the confidence of the French Ambassador at Berlin; now it was clear that he was weakening in his resistance to the military conspiracy.

But even later the battle for the Kaiser was in doubt. Whatever may be said of Herr Ballin's actions since the war began, it will not be denied that he, like the commercial class generally, was anxious for peace, if not on any lofty ground then on the low ground of self-interest.

He had everything to lose and nothing to gain by war. Moreover, he knew perhaps better than any one else in Germany the temper of this country, for it was in the city of London that he had learned the lessons that enabled him to build up the great mercantile marine of Germany, and but for an accident of circumstance he might have been the Napoleon of the shipping trade in England instead of in Germany. Outside the official circle he is the most intimate friend of the Kaiser, and he may be assumed to have been as familiar as any one with the workings of his mind at this critical time. In November 1913 Herr Ballin was asked by an English friend what the Kaiser really meant—was it war or peace? "I really cannot say," was his reply. "It is like this. We are shouting 'Peace' into one ear and the soldiers are shouting 'War' into the other ear. And which shout will prevail it is impossible to say."

The difficulty was increased by his incalculable character. The French have a saying about a certain type of man that he has "a devil in the body." That saying is singularly applicable to the Kaiser. He is afflicted with the colossal egoism of one who feels that the whole universe is revolving round his godlike personality. His temperament is that of the stage, and wherever he moves the limelight follows him. The impression he creates in personal contact is one of enormous energy and mental alertness, of powers wayward and uncertain, but fused with a spark of genius, of a temperament of high nervous force bordering on disease. The movements of his mind are sudden and shattering, governed by mood and by an autocratic impulse that baffles calculation. He is responsive to every emotional appeal and his laughter is as careless as a boy's, but it is laughter that you cannot trust, for it may change to lightning at a word. The spur of the moment drives him, and the

telegram form is the symbol of his thought. Nothing illustrates this impatience and subjection to impulse more than the circumstance of the famous Kruger telegram, which was launched at this country in a spasm of anger with the late Lord Salisbury. "The world" (if I may quote from something I wrote of the Kaiser after meeting him some ten years ago) "distrusts the artistic temperament in affairs. It prefers the stolid man who thinks slowly and securely and acts with deliberation. It likes a man whose mental processes it can follow and understand, a man of the type of the late Duke of Devonshire, solid, honest, and not the least bit clever. There is the root of the disquiet with which the Kaiser has been regarded for twenty years. He is a man of moods and impulses, an artist to his finger tips, astonishingly versatile, restless, and unnerving. He keeps his audience in a state of tense expectation. Any moment, it feels, a spark from this incandescent personality may drop into the powder magazine."

But if his personality made his actions incalculable, his political doctrine gave them a definite and fatal direction. What that doctrine is we have had abundant evidence from his own lips, for there has been no more talkative monarch in our own or any time. During the quarter of a century that he has reigned he has delivered more than a thousand public or semi-public speeches, and as one reads them in the collected form in the volume edited by Mr. Christian Gauss, the mind of the Kaiser is revealed with extraordinary clearness and definition. It is said that words are made to conceal thought. That may be true. But they do not conceal personality, and the cumulative effect of these speeches has the quality of a piece of self-portraiture that is final and convincing. It may not shed light upon whether the Kaiser wanted the war or was forced into it by the

military party and the Crown Prince. But as one reads and sees the real Kaiser shaping himself one feels that, whether he wanted it or not, he was the artificer of war. In all our complexities there is a central core which is the real man. It may be difficult to discover it, but it is always there and it is always ultimately operative. "Truth," said Ruskin, "is polygonal. I never feel sure that I have got it until I have contradicted myself five or six times." And the contradictions of the Kaiser's personality are many more than five or six. And yet in these speeches they are resolved into a unity so simple and decisive that it seems strange that his versatility should have obscured the central drift of his character and policy. War was not, perhaps, his deliberate purpose, but it was his destiny.

It was implicit in his doctrine. The keynote of that doctrine drums through his speeches as the note drummed in the head of Schumann in the days of his insanity. Indeed, it is so persistent, so extravagant, so unrelieved by any touch of humour, as to suggest insanity. That note is the divinity of his kingship. The world has travelled so far from the doctrine of divine right that it is not easy to conceive the mind in which it still lives as a reality. But in the mind of the Kaiser it is a reality that consumes everything else in its fierce fire. He believes that his house is the divinely appointed instrument of God made to lead the German nation to redeem the earth as absolutely as Moses was raised to lead the chosen people out of Egypt. "Then," he says at Münster in 1907, "then the German people will be the rock of granite upon which our Lord God can build and complete his culture in the world." He sees the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. And out of the cloud the Almighty is speaking to him, William, His servant and confidant.

Hence the constant and familiar allusions to God. There is not a speech in which His name does not appear, and it is always employed with that note of familiarity which the confidential servant uses in speaking of the master who is even more friend and colleague than master. The claim of divine appointment is not held timidly or asserted vaguely. It is declared openly and defiantly. Thus at Konigsberg in 1910 he says:

"And here my grandfather, again, by his own right, set the Prussian crown upon his head, once more emphasising the fact that it was accorded him by the will of God alone and not by Parliament or by any assemblage of the people or by popular vote, and that he thus looked upon himself as the chosen instrument of Heaven and as such performed his duties as Regent and Sovereign."

Even that cynical atheist, Frederick the Great, was the servant of God, for it was in reference to him that the Kaiser said: "And just as the great king was never left in the lurch by the old Ally, so the Fatherland and this beautiful province will always be near His heart." Here one sees that terrible absence of humour that is the real disease of the man. He has never laughed at himself. He has never seen himself, in Falstaff's phrase, "like a forked radish carved out of cheese-parings after supper." He is afflicted with a frightful gravity about himself and his house that is in itself a form of madness. "I regard my whole position," he tells the representatives of Brandenburg, "as given to me direct from Heaven and that I have been called by the Highest to do His work." Sometimes, indeed, even the Almighty is subordinated. "*Suprema lex regis voluntas*" he writes in the Golden Book of Munich. He takes nothing for granted, but declares his omnipotence on all occasions with a childish vanity. "My Church, of which I am *summus episcopus*," he says in lecturing the office-bearers on their duties. And again, "There is only one

master in this country. That am I. Who opposes me I shall crush to pieces."

It would be a mistake to suppose from all this that his motive is ambition. His pride out-soars ambition. That quality is the attribute of ordinary humanity, and the Kaiser no more thinks of himself in the terms of ordinary humanity than you and I think of ourselves in the terms of the troglodyte. If you prick him he knows that he will bleed, and if you tickle him he knows that he will laugh. In this he is human, but in his mission he is divine. And that divinity cannot be delegated. Hence his repudiation of Bismarck. Hence, too, those constant references to William " the Great." The idea that it was Bismarck who was the creator of modern Germany was an insult to the divinity of the house of Hohenzollern. It was an insult to the Almighty. It must be corrected by raising his grandfather to the skies where old William, who was really a modest and sensible man and hated war, never sought to intrude. And so we have the constant insistence on William " the Great."

This vision of himself as divine leads straight to other vital consequences. It governs his conception of the state and his relation to the people. Since he is the august instrument of the Almighty it follows that the government is upon his shoulders, and not the government alone but even opinion, taste, and religious belief. Hence his deliverances on art and music, literature and theology, his sermons and his moral discourses. They have all, together with their crude and shallow brilliancy, a Sinaitic seriousness as of one who does not speak as a man but as a god. In these things, the deification of himself is amusing. It is when we come to his attitude towards the State that it leads to blood and iron. He sees in democracy the spirit of rebellion against himself

and therefore against the Almighty. He is the lawgiver of the Germans as Moses was the lawgiver of Israel, and these demands for liberty, this unrest of labour are the motions of people who are following strange gods and must be chastised with scorpions. What have they to do with the law, except obey it? Is not the government placed in his hands by God and will he not be faithful to the divine task imposed on him?

And so he lectures the strikers at Berlin or Breslau like an avenging angel, and denounces the socialists like a Property Defence League advocate. Thus:

"For to me every Social Democrat is synonymous with an enemy of the realm and of the Fatherland. Should I, therefore, discover that Social Democratic tendencies become involved in the agitation and instigate unlawful opposition, I will step in sternly and ruthlessly and bring to bear all the power I possess—and it is great." (Berlin, 1889.)

And again—this time to the working men of Breslau in 1902:

"For years you and your brothers have allowed yourselves to be deluded by the agitators of the Socialists into thinking that if you do not belong to this party and acknowledge it no one pays any attention to you and that you will not be in a position to obtain a hearing for your just interests in the amelioration of your condition.

"That is a gross lie and a serious error. Instead of representing you directly, the agitators seek to stir you up against your employers, against the other classes, against the throne and against the church. . . . And to what end is this power used? Not for furthering your welfare but for sowing hatred between the classes and for disseminating cowardly slanders that respect nothing sacred; and finally, they have outraged the Almighty Himself."

From this absolutist attitude to the state there follows the fact that his sole reliance is on the army. He not only does not ask for the sanction of the people: he repudiates it. He is not a constitutional king, but the

Supreme War Lord, and he governs not by consent but by the power of the sword. If his people are good he will be kind to them; if they are disobedient he will flog them and shoot them. Throughout his speeches the glitter of the sword is as constant as the name of God. Indeed the two words are almost interchangeable. Even when he makes a gift to the great Minister whom he has discarded and outraged it takes the form of a sword, and he says:

"I could find no better token than a sword, this noblest symbol of the Germans; a symbol of that instrument which your Highness with my late grandfather helped to shape, to sharpen, and also to wield; the symbol of that great, powerful period of building whose mortar was blood and iron; that weapon which is never dismayed and which when necessary, in the hands of kings and princes, will defend against internal foes that unity of the Fatherland which it had once conquered from the foes without."

"Internal foes." Again and again that threat of the army against his own people if they are disobedient recurs like a refrain. It is to the army that he looks to preserve his throne and suppress the rebellious. In the first words he addressed to it—three days before he troubled to send a message to his people—he declared:

"The absolutely inviolable dependence upon the War Lord (Kriegsherr) is in the army, the inheritance of which descends from father to son, from generation to generation. . . . So are we bound together—I and the Army—so are we born for one another, and so shall we hold together indissolubly, whether, as God wills, we are to have peace or storm."

The army is his own private inheritance. It is the sole pillar, as he says in another speech, upon which his empire rests. Now let us see what is his view of its functions. He is addressing the recruits to the Regiment of the Guard on their swearing in at Potsdam in 1891. Three renderings of the speech are on record. They do

not vary essentially, but I quote that taken from the *Neisser Zeitung:*

"Recruits! You have now before the consecrated servant of the Lord, and before His altar sworn fealty to me. You are still too young to understand the true meaning of what has just been said; but be diligent now and follow the directions and instructions given you. You have sworn loyalty to me; that means, children of my guard, that you are now my soldiers; you have given yourselves up to me, body and soul; there is for you but one enemy and that is my enemy. In view of the present Socialistic agitations it may come to pass that I shall command you to shoot your own relatives, brothers, yes, parents — which God forbid — but even then you must follow my command without a murmur."

And now out of his own mouth we have got the full doctrine of kingship. It is stated over and over again, always with the same fearless directness and lucidity, for among his many gifts is a distinct skill in picturesque oratory. The doctrine is this: (1) he is Emperor and King by divine right, by the direct election of God; (2) the state is his family property, to be administered justly but with absolute freedom from interference, criticism, or attack; (3) the weapon of government is the sword of the army which is the private inheritance of his family, and the purpose of which is to smite down his internal enemies as well as his external enemies.

The doctrine sounds like the gospel of the madhouse; but it is absolutely sincere, like so much that one hears in the madhouse. Nor is it an empty creed. On the contrary, it is the creed that has governed Germany and out of which the war came. For in order to make his gospel possible, even with the help of his army, he had to turn his people's eyes to other lands and to whet their appetites with the lust of conquest. The social reforms that Bismarck had introduced to promote Germany's military efficiency and incidentally to keep the people quiet had exhausted their influence. A new *motif* must

be found or the old rebellious passion—the old demand for liberty within—which had been suppressed since 1848 would be irresistible. And so in his speeches we trace side by side with the gospel of divine right, the gospel of *Weltmacht*. Germany is to have "its place in the sun." The German Michel is to go forth in shining armour and with "mailed fist," carrying the culture of the Fatherland into the darkness without and adding to the glory of the house Hohenzollern and of their "powerful Ally, the old, good God (*der alte, gute Gott*) in heaven, who, ever since the time of the Great Elector and of the great king, has always been on our side." And seeing that *Weltmacht* is ultimately only another name for naval power, he starts the great naval policy and declares—with that aptness for the telling phrase that he always shows—that "our future lies upon the water" (Stettin, 1898).

And so he keeps his people quiet, now flattering them with visions of "a German world empire and of a Hohenzollern world ruler" (Bremen, 1905), now brandishing his hereditary sword in the face of the insurgent Socialists. The undercurrent throughout is the thought of the internal menace to his absolute rule. In resisting that menace he was driven into courses that had only one goal. The alternative to democratic freedom at home was the policy of the high hand abroad, and though he did not desire war he was prepared to invite it with the external enemies of the state rather than with the internal enemies of his despotism. Surrender to the Socialists was an unthinkable humiliation. It was more. It was disloyalty to "the old, good God" who had been the family Ally so long. And so he sharpened his sword and drifted towards Niagara, and to-day he is not fighting the Socialists. They are fighting for him. They are falling in thousands and tens of thousands and

hundreds of thousands to exalt the house they hate and the man who has treated them as his personal enemies. It is the strangest irony in all the history of war.

Perhaps the Kaiser is mad. Pride such as his is hardly consistent with sanity. But certainly the peoples of Europe will be mad if, after this frightful lesson, they do not make an end on the earth for ever of the doctrine of the divine right of kings.

II. THE CURSE OF BISMARCK

If we see in this denial of popular liberty and this assertion of absolutism, based on the power of the sword, the real clue to the war, we shall find the evil genius of Germany in the man whose centenary falls so fittingly in the midst of the catastrophe that marks the fulfilment of his policy. For without Bismarck the despotism of the Kaiser would have been impossible. It is true that the Kaiser repudiated the old minister as ruthlessly as Henry V. repudiated Falstaff and subjected him to the grossest indignities. But that was because, like most kings, he hated the sense of obligation and because he would have "no rival near the throne." He would be king not in form but in fact. He would be absolute in war and in statecraft, and would have about him flunkeys to do his bidding, not men to dispute his judgment. And it is true also that the policy of the Kaiser departed very startlingly from that of the old chancellor who did not talk sounding bombast about *Weltmacht*, and who declared that the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. But, nevertheless, the high-vaulting schemes of the Kaiser were the natural fruit of the Bismarckian tree, and the great adventure of to-day was latent in the policy of the iron chancellor.

It was a coincidence for the curious that brought the great Prussian upon the stage at the moment that the great Corsican was leaving it. Ten days before that April 1, 1815, Napoleon had reached Paris from Elba, and three months later he met his final overthrow at Waterloo. His star went down never to rise again; but in the north another star as blood-red was coming up over the horizon. To-day that star, too, we hope is setting over those same fields of Flanders where Napoleonism perished a hundred years ago.

What are the thoughts of Germany as it celebrates the centenary of the man who fashioned it with blood and iron? Will it see in this war the triumph of his policy, or will it see in it the failure of his successors to follow his astute diplomacy? It is a commonplace of contemporary criticism that Bismarck would not have suffered Germany to be encircled by enemies. He never under-estimated his possible foes, never cultivated a reckless vanity, always insured and reinsured himself against contingencies, above all, never swerved from his root maxim, "keep friends with Russia." That was the keynote of his policy, and the injunction which the old King, his master, uttered from his death-bed to his grandson, "Never lose touch with the Tsar," was only the echo of that policy. The friendship of England also was his constant aim, not because he loved England, for England like France was the home of that democratic spirit that he hated, but because his ambitions did not bring him into conflict with England, and he was not the man to make an enemy where he could make a friend.

But all the same the war is the sequel to the work of Bismarck, and is true to the spirit of that remarkable man. In him Prussianism reached its highest expression; but it did not reach the limits of its dream. Each

century since the eighteenth has seen the horizon of that dream widened, and though Bismarck himself had neither colonial nor naval ambitions the claim of Prussia to-day to " World Power " is only the expansion of that idea of dominion that he inherited from Frederick the Great.

His relation to the events of to-day can best be understood by briefly recalling the facts of the Germany that he found and the Germany that he founded. When he was in his cradle a hundred years ago the German nation had just emerged from the nightmare of Napoleon. In a very real sense it was Napoleon who gave the Germans a national consciousness and paved the way for Bismarck. It is true that, even after the overthrow of Napoleon, the German nation still lacked political unity. It was divided into multitudes of independent states and free cities; but the humiliation of the Napoleonic irruption had discovered the solidarity of sentiment that underlay all separatisms, and the teaching of Fichte, the songs of Körner, the educational fervour of Stein, and the military genius of Scharnhorst had given an impulse to unity that only awaited the man and the moment.

The movement towards unity could only come from one of two sources—from the Habsburgs of Austria who had made themselves great by marriage, or the Hohenzollerns of Prussia who had made themselves great by the sword. Before Germany could be consolidated the rivalry of Austria and Prussia must be settled. Frederick in the eighteenth century had first challenged the supremacy of Austria and laid the foundations of the greatness of Prussia (that Slav wilderness which the knights of the Teutonic Order had wrested from the heathen in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries). It is one of the ironies of history that it was with the help

of the sea power of this country that Frederick won his treacherous duel with Maria Theresa of Austria. In those days we were prepared to ally ourselves with any power which would help to check the ambitions of France, and the King of Prussia was more popular in England than our own king. Even to-day the public-house sign of the "King of Prussia," with its cocked hat and pigtail, is a familiar reminder of the time when we were helping to make Prussia great.

Out of the welter of the Napoleonic wars and the intrigues of the Vienna Congress, Prussia emerged with new territorial gains, among them those rich Rhinelands that became the source of its industrial greatness and strengthened its arm for its next adventure. The great end that Prussia had in view, the conquest of Germany, was now well in sight, but first Austria must be brushed aside. There came a momentary diversion with the revolutionary outbreak of 1848, which led to the Frankfort Constitution and the pale semblance of German unity on the basis of free institutions. It collapsed, and no one rejoiced more than young Bismarck, with his hatred of democracy and his passion for the "Christian monarchy" of his ideal, embodied in the kingship of Prussia.

His advent to power in 1862 was a portent. Parliament had refused the king money for the reorganisation of the army, and the king, much against his will, called in this formidable man as chief minister to help him to overawe his people. His first speech as minister gave the keynote to that policy of brutal aggression for which Prussia has become synonymous. "The German question," he said, "cannot be settled by speeches or Parliamentary decrees, but only by blood and iron." For four years he ruled without a Budget and crushed the opposition under his iron heel, while he prepared

his great scheme for making the Prussian monarchy master of Germany.

He had marked Austria down for slaughter, and with diabolical cunning and treachery first involved her as an accomplice in the theft of Schleswig-Holstein, and then used that incident as a cause of quarrel. But he delayed his blow in 1865 in order to insure himself by securing the neutrality of Italy and France. That done he launched his bolt and in six or seven weeks Austria was at his feet. But he would not allow the king to make any territorial annexation, for he wanted Austria as his friend in the next act of his drama. He had sought the neutrality of France to help him to overthrow Austria; now he needed the quiescence of Austria to help him to overthrow France. He knew that Napoleon III. would not allow him to complete his conquest of Germany without a struggle, and for that struggle he now prepared. And Napoleon and his preposterous Foreign Minister, Grammont, made the task easy. Napoleon attempted to avert the storm by a scheme of mutual plunder. Benedetti, the French ambassador at Berlin, put before Bismarck a proposal by which Prussia should be allowed to incorporate the South German states in the new Northern Confederation, while France should be allowed to annex Belgium and Luxemburg. Bismarck smiled. That was not his way of achieving German unity. He must not steal the German States with the help of France: he must give the German States a common quarrel with France and out of that quarrel bring them into his net. But he kept Benedetti's draft and duly published it in *The Times* in order to keep English opinion right at the outbreak of war.

His opportunity came with the question of the Spanish succession; but the unwillingness of the king to engage in another war almost defeated his aims.

Grammont, however, came to Bismarck's rescue. When William had yielded on the succession question, the ridiculous French minister sought to convert his diplomatic victory into a rout. He demanded that the King of Prussia should undertake not to raise the question again. William did not want to fight, but neither did he want to be humiliated. He wrote the famous Ems telegram, and Bismarck, seizing his opportunity, doctored it in such a way as to make the war he desired unavoidable. And out of that war he emerged with his prize. At Versailles he brought the German Empire to birth and made the King of Prussia its master, and the Prussian spirit its dictator.

The free German peoples had been welded at last, but they had lost their freedom in winning their unity. They had been conquered by the fierce knights of the Teutonic Order, and absorbed in a state which knew nothing of democracy or freedom and rested frankly on the army, and whose King was the Supreme War Lord of an ancient fighting caste. In a word, the current of German life instead of swelling the tide of liberty had been turned back into the channels of Cæsarism. Germany, in becoming powerful, had become divorced from the movement of Western Europe, and the triumph of Bismarck's policy crushed every instinct of freedom in the dust. The Emperor reigned not by consent of his people, but in virtue of the army which he alone controlled. Parliamentary institutions were a jest, and the most powerful political party in the country—the Social Democrats—were openly reviled by the Kaiser as the enemies of the Fatherland.

The maintenance of such a system in the heart of the modern world could only be secured by conquests and more conquests. If Prussia was to endure it must Prussianise not only Germany but Europe and the

world. And so, out of the triumph of Bismarck, there came the new dream of sea power and world power and the preparation for an adventure more vast than that of Frederick or of Bismarck. And caught in the toils of the military machine, and dazzled by the sudden success which their genius for organisation had brought them, the people became obsessed by the theory of the super-race.

They came to worship the machine of Might, and since they could not free themselves from its tyranny, compromised by believing that they would do other people good by bringing them under its tyranny also. And with splendid self-deception they called the tyranny "Kultur." With their natural tendency to abstract thinking they were hypnotised by the idea of the state, and patriotism which to other peoples is an instinct and a warm-blooded passion became to them a cold philosophy, an arid creed, formulated by crabbed professors and learned in the schoolroom like a multiplication table or a Greek verb.

The triumph of Bismarck, in short, in imposing the chains of Prussianism on Germany led straight to the world catastrophe of to-day. He gave the German nation unity and power; but he denied it freedom, and in denying it freedom perverted its soul. Had his policy been less successful in a material sense, the impulse of the people towards internal liberty would have been more powerful and would ultimately have overthrown the militarist despotism. But Bismarck's imperialism was astonishingly successful, and democratic sentiment failing to overthrow the iron god of his creation was turned aside to grind the mills of its purpose. Unable to destroy the monster, the people fell under its enchantment. The war will lift the spell from them. It will smash the idol of blood and iron and release the spirit of Germany from the curse of Bismarck.

III. THE KAISER'S GUILT

It is stated by one who has seen him that the Kaiser has lost his air of bustling activity, that his countenance is grave and careworn, and that his hair has turned almost white. We may receive this report, as we have learned to receive everything in these days, with reserve; but its probability can hardly be doubted. No one who has ever come in contact with the Kaiser can have failed to be impressed by his highly nervous, almost febrile temperament. He is one of those men whose voltage is always excessive. You feel that a day must come when the wire will fuse. And it must be remembered that he has lived on the crest of a pride that has never before known a check from man or circumstance. He has sailed all his days on a sea of glory, in an atmosphere of despotic power that brought no wholesome reminder that he is vulnerable like the rest of us and may be made a jest of fortune as easily as a clown. When the pride of such a man breaks under him he has no support left. His fall is proportioned to the extravagance of his claims. If he is not infallible, he is nothing.

Now, at the end of nine months of war, the Kaiser is disillusioned. His house of mirrors is shattered and he has passed into a valley of humiliation more bitter than that traversed by any man in history—more bitter than that which Napoleon passed through as he fled from the field of Waterloo, for Napoleon had been familiar with realities all his life and knew that the jest might at any moment be against him. If we would measure the disillusion we must look at the situation to-day in the light of the faith with which the Kaiser set out. That faith is best realised from a remark which he made to a member of the present Government on each of the two occasions on which they met. It was

something like this: "I cannot understand why you ally yourself to a broken reed like France. Should war begin, my armies will be in Paris within a fortnight." And then he repeated with the sunny confidence of one who had all the keys of fate beneath his fingers—"Within a fortnight."

That was the dream. Let us look at the reality. What is the capital fact that emerges from the events of the past nine months? I think it is this: the hypnotism of the Prussian helmet is gone. For nearly fifty years it has held unchallenged sway over the mind of Europe. Those of us who are middle-aged began our conscious life under the shadow of that formidable symbol of conquest and power. There is a story—I think it is one of Maupassant's—which tells how a Prussian soldier in 1870 got separated from his fellows, went to sleep in a ditch, woke up and looked over the wall of a neighbouring farm. As the helmet rose above the wall, the brave fellows inside fled, leaving the Uhlan to range at large. Presently the brave fellows returned with reinforcements, surrounded the farm and captured the Uhlan. And the tale ended with the presentation of the Cross of the Legion of Honour or some other decoration to the hero of the victory.

That story illustrates in an extravagant way the legend of the Prussian helmet. It was an enchanted, mystic helmet, winged with victory. A legend of this sort is a supreme military asset, and Germany has lived on it for nearly half a century. She lives on it no longer. The German soldier is stripped of all the glamour with which the triumphs of Bismarck and Moltke invested him. He is not only not the best soldier in Europe; he is not the second best. The fact is not due to intrinsic inferiority, but to a mistaken tradition. He is not wanting in courage but he is wanting in individuality. He can advance to

be shot down in the mass, for he has been taught that collective courage, but he cannot stand to be shot down alone.

This inferiority of the human factor is related to another cause of disullusion. The faith of the Kaiser was founded on Krupps. It was believed that the war when it came would be won by the big gun, and full of this conviction the Germans placed a reliance on that arm which has not been warranted by experience. Its achievements, it is true, have been immense. Wherever it has been able to come within range of the fortresses it has ground them to powder. The fortress of position is no longer tenable except by a far-flung system of mobile defence based on earthworks. Even in the field the guns will triumph unless there is an adequate gunpower against them. Nor can we exaggerate the advantage which Germany derived, and still derives, from its overwhelming superiority in machine-guns, which are as powerful an instrument in defence as the big gun is in attack. But in spite of all this the German faith in iron has not justified itself. The point perhaps may be put thus: In the German Army the gun is first and the men are only subsidiary to the gun; among the Allies the man is first and the gun is only the means of preparing the way for the decisive action of the men. After nine months there would seem to be little doubt as to which is the sound theory. Battles are won today, as they have always been won, by men, and it is because Germany believed that they were won by material and that the only use for men was as material that she has failed. Whatever guns could do she has done, and if she could have repeated the tactics of 1870, her early superiority in big guns would have given her a speedy triumph. But she has been disillusioned here also. The Kaiser's campaign was based on the lessons

of 1870. He ought to have remembered that nothing was less likely than that France would allow those tactics to be repeated—that never again would she allow her armies to be driven out of the open where the genius of her men is at its highest and where great howitzers cannot be the final arbiter.

If we would understand the measure of the Kaiser's failure, we must recall the calculations that coursed through his mind on that momentous Saturday as he stood in the midst of his council, pen in hand, balancing the risks and chances before taking the plunge into war. On the face of it, the combination against him was overwhelming. His eastern frontier was threatened by an enemy numerically stronger than himself; on his western frontier was an enemy numerically inferior, perhaps in the proportion of seven to ten, an enemy which Germany had beaten with ease in the past, but which, nevertheless, could not be despised, and which would have the support of the British Army and the Belgian Army. At sea his fleet would be held in check by the most powerful navy in the world.

What had he to put against this combination? He had one ally, Austria, upon whom he could rely, but that ally was already engaged in a war with Serbia. Italy was an ally only in name, had been such since the Bismarck-Crispi days, and would certainly refuse to fight for the aggrandisement of its historic enemy. For the rest, Turkey, whom he had cultivated so industriously, might come in if things went well with him—perhaps even Sweden and Holland might join him, but only under compulsion, and when he had shown that he could do without them. Here he was getting into the region of speculation. Still more speculative were his calculations as to internal trouble in England over the Ulster question and in Russian Poland.

We can conceive him summing up. The combination against him was composed of solid facts—Russia, France, Great Britain, Belgium, Serbia. His own combination, apart from Austria, was a thing of shadows and hopes. And he knew Austria's genius for defeat too well to put excessive confidence in her support. He came back, therefore, to the one indisputable asset at his command—the gigantic war machine that he had perfected for his purpose through twenty-five years of peace.

Was that machine, unaided, capable of giving him victory over Europe? And here we can see his mind rapidly estimating the value of the enemy. The Belgians? What rabble were they to impede his path? He would go through them as lightly as through a flight of snowflakes. He did not understand that liberty is a more powerful engine than any ever manufactured at Essen. It was the delay at Liége and the wholly unexpected resistance offered by the Belgian Army throughout August and September that sowed the seed of all that followed. And so with the English—those fools of fortune who obstructed his path to world dominion. What had he to fear from this race of sentimentalists which could not stamp out rebellion in Ulster, or whip its insurgent women into obedience, and which was so hag-ridden by the fetish of liberty that it gave self-government to the people it had conquered? It was a bubble that would vanish at a touch of his sword. The British Navy? Yes, that was a reality. But perhaps Admiral Tirpitz might make a lucky stroke, and, at the worst, he would, adapting Bismarck's phrase, deal with the British Navy at Paris. Serbia? Well, even Austria's facility for defeat had its limits. There remained France and Russia. These were the only realities that his calculations left him to face. Of these one was swift, but inferior; the other slow, but formidable. He was

both swift and formidable. We see his sum getting near the conclusion. He will launch the whole power of his terrible machine against France, scatter her armies, overwhelm her in a fortnight and dictate terms of peace at Paris. Then, master of Western Europe, he will turn to the East with his incomparable machine and destroy the hosts of Russia at his leisure.

That was the conclusion of his calculations. On paper it looks even convincing. In that respect it is typical of so much that is wrong with the Prussian mind. That mind is bookish and theoretic. It is at once astonishingly learned and incomparably ignorant. It knows all the material facts and ignores all the human and moral facts. The incidents of these days are strewn with examples. I take three. Germany is eagerly appealing for the support of the small neutral states and at the same time its chancellor talks of the treaty he has signed guaranteeing the neutrality of one of these states as " a scrap of paper " to be torn up at will. It cants about " the freedom of the seas " and sinks great liners filled with non-combatants at sight and without stretching out a hand to save the innocent victims. It is appealing for the sympathy of the United States and at the same time razes Louvain to the ground, drops bombs upon sleeping cities and sows the sea with floating mines—does everything in fact which is most calculated to outrage the moral sentiment of the most moral and sentimental people in the western world.

And so in the case of the calculations on which the Kaiser based his decision. They have come to grief not because they were intrinsically wrong, but because they left out the realities. His faith in his machine was sound. He believed that he could " hack his way through " to Paris in a fortnight. And nothing is more clear than this, that if he had had to deal with France

alone and with obvious material facts alone, his calculation would have proved true. The world has never seen anything comparable with that tremendous drive southward from the Sambre to the Marne. It was not like the movement of an army, but like the movement of some mechanical force instinct with devilish purpose.

But like all mechanism it had to work according to absolute conditions. It admitted of no unknown or spiritual factors. It was a machine, and it had the reasoning of machinery. Now war never was and never can be a matter of Force alone. However perfect the machine, it must be directed with a large understanding of the intangible factors involved—national feeling, personal values, the psychology of men and peoples, the play of accident. History is full of the triumph of these things over material calculation, and no soil is more rich in such lessons than that of the Netherlands.

Take, as an instance of what is meant, that episode after the battle of Antietam in the American Civil War. One after another his generals implored Lee to retreat across the Potomac. The losses had been appalling. Hood was quite unmanned. "My God!" cried Lee to him, "where is the splendid division you had this morning?" "They are lying on the field where you sent them," answered Hood. Even Jackson urged withdrawal. But Lee was immovable. "Gentlemen," he said, rising in his stirrups, "we will not cross the Potomac to-night. . . . If McClellan wants to fight in the morning I will give him battle. Go." Now, according to all material calculations, Lee was wrong. But one of the qualities that give him a place among the greatest commanders of history was his grasp of the mind and temperament of his opponents. He had one method for this man, another for that. He knew that the overcaution of McClellan would prevent him following up his

blow, and he was right. McClellan did not attack him next morning, and Lee was left with the prestige of a moral victory.

It was elements like these that the Kaiser left out. He forged a bolt that was to go through every obstruction to his goal in a given time. It was to be irresistible, overwhelming, final. The completeness of the preparations will remain a monument of German efficiency and organisation. And their failure will remain a monument of the truth that Force is not the absolute master of the destiny of men even on the field of battle, and that the soul of man counts for more than " reeking tube and iron shard."

But if the military failure has been emphatic, not less conspicuous has been the political failure. Germany began the war fortified with the most amazing delusions about the world. They were the delusions of a bookish and unimaginative people who laboriously study the facts, but miss the meaning. Take the delusion in regard to the British Empire. Time will show—the evidence is accumulating in a remarkable way—how much their calculations were based on the Ulster affair. It was hoped that England would not fight because she would be engaged in a revolutionary struggle at home. It was believed that if she did fight her empire would collapse like a house of cards. She was a decadent nation, because militarism was not her faith, because she trifled with the Carson campaign, because she allowed the suffragettes to play wild tricks and did not suppress them with a ruthless hand, because she gave self-government to South Africa, and so on. All this was the mark of weakness—the mark of a dying people feebly grasping the sceptre of dominion. It was a fatal miscalculation. What the Prussian mind took for weakness was Britain's impregnable strength. The

Prussian mind could not grasp the idea of English liberty any more than Lord Milner can grasp it. It is that principle of liberty which has made the whole Empire rise with such passion to this great argument. The Kaiser has not destroyed the Empire: he has established it. He has made it realise as it never realised before its deep and abiding unity, its lofty spiritual meaning, its great gospel of freedom.

Or take the delusions about Belgium. The Kaiser knows to-day that the invasion of Belgium was not only a crime, but a blunder. As a military expedient it was wrong; as a political expedient it was fatal, for it left Germany without a friend in the world, except the Turk. And the policy of " frightfulness " was equally ruinous. It was intended to keep Belgium subservient by terror, but it overshot the mark. It made her soldiers heroes and her people martyrs. It shocked the conscience of the world and left Germany a criminal at the bar of humanity. Her overthrow was no longer merely a political necessity: it was a sacred duty. Against the flaming indictment of that enormous infamy all her petty arts to win the favour of the neutral states have been vain. They are arts that, again, reveal her strange limitations, her laborious futility, her failure to understand the springs of human action. She engineers a wonderful campaign of private letters, she buys up newspapers in every land, she organises press agencies. These devices seem, at first, very clever, very Machiavellian, very dangerous. In the end they are nothing. In the presence of the awful facts mere ingenuities perish.

But though it is the folly of German policy which is most interesting to the psychologist, it is its wickedness which is the practical concern of society. The world is in the presence of an organised criminality without precedent in history. Not since Genghis Khan devas-

tated Asia from Pekin to the Dnieper has the human family suffered such desolation. But Genghis Khan was a barbarian who recognised no law, human or divine. The Kaiser's war is a betrayal of every human law that he has ratified, and an outrage on every moral sanction by which civilised society lives. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour have declared that this war is a war for the defence of the public law of the world. It is a war to assert the authority of a collective justice over the affairs of nations. The German position is the denial of that authority. Treitschke declared that there was no power above the state, that the state was might, that it could be brought to no court and subjected to no punishment apart from the punishment of a superior might.

It is true that in practice the Kaiser has even gone beyond Treitschke's teaching. For example, while he taught that treaties could not stand in the way of the purposes of the state, he laid it down as the duty of a state to denounce a treaty before breaking it. Germany did not denounce the Belgian treaty. She has not denounced it to this day. It stands in scarlet evidence against her. But it is Treitschke's gospel of the unchallenged supremacy of the state (or, more truly Hegel's, for he first sowed the seed) upon which Germany is acting, and it is that gospel the world has to break. What in practice has it meant? It has meant that in the sight of Germany there is no moral law on the earth to-day. War in any case is a cruel and merciless thing. It is its business to be merciless. It is organised murder; but because it is organised it is governed by rules. It is the equivalent in national affairs to the duel in private affairs, and there is nothing more rigorous than the respect with which the laws of the duel are observed—no dishonour so deep as that implied by disobedience to those laws. The meaning of this is clear. Without

that stringent code the duel would be the sport of the assassin. The laws are necessary to protect all who follow it, against what the general conscience knows to be wrong.

In the same way the rules of war are made by the world as a whole for the common protection in case of need. It is as though in normal times we know that we have a wild beast amongst us, caged and chained. One day it will be let loose. We do not know who will be the victims of its fury, ourselves or our rivals. But we agree, in the general interests of humanity, to put certain limits upon its powers. To-day the wild beast is loose, and Germany has released it from every restraint to which she had given her sacred pledge. The crimes of Louvain, Dinant, Aerschot, Senlis, and Scarborough, the collective punishments, the poisoned wells, the deadly gases, the submarine murders, all culminating in the crowning infamy of the *Lusitania*, are declarations to the world that Germany knows no law of God or man in the pursuit of her object. "We did wrong," said Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, in speaking of the invasion of Belgium, "but we had to hack our way through." He did not say it to apologise to the world. He said it to justify Germany to the world.

And that has been the attitude throughout. Germany has committed these official crimes knowing that she was breaking her solemn covenant with civilisation. She knew that her bond forbade her to bombard undefended towns—that the same bond forbade her to exact collective punishment for individual offences, to plunder the towns and rob the citizens, to drown innocent women and children. Yet she has butchered and burned her way through Belgium and France, she has taken hundreds of lives for single and unproved offences, she has demolished towns for revenge and stolen the

wealth of the cities she has occupied. These things have been done not in anger, but on policy. They have been done as it were in cold blood, according to a hideous theory of terrorism. They are the crimes of the German Government and it is these crimes with which the civil conscience of the world has to deal.

How are they to be dealt with? We know how the military power of Germany is to be dealt with. The sword must be broken by the sword, and Germany must make good to the last penny the material evil she has wrought. But the field of battle is not the only place where judgment must be delivered. If we are to emerge from this frightful harvest with any gain to set against our loss, it must be gain in the region of the moral governance of nations. Humanity must strike a blow against the infamous doctrine that there is no power above the state. That blow cannot be struck by the sword. If respect for treaties, for international law, for the plighted word of states is to be rehabilitated it must be rehabilitated by the deliberate verdict of society.

In other words, these crimes against the law of nations must be avenged, not by similar crimes on our part, but in the same way as they would be avenged in civil society. If a man murders another he is tried for his crime, and if he is proved guilty he is hanged. If he breaks the law which society has made for its protection he is answerable to the law. That is the principle that should be applied here. Let it be made clear that at the end of the war, and as a part of the conditions of peace, those who have been responsible for crimes against humanity, against the civil population and against the laws of nations shall be tried as common criminals by courts of justice according to the laws of the land they have outraged.

This principle should be applicable to all sides and

it should be applicable not to underlings but to principals, to men like Bülow who issued that infamous incitement to crime at Dinant, above all to the Kaiser himself. It is not for us to say what Germany shall do with the dynasty that has brought it to this disaster. That we must leave to the people themselves who, unless they are hopelessly unteachable, will have been enlightened by the war. But it is for us to say what shall be done with the men who have outraged the public law, broken their bonds with society, and murdered inoffensive citizens. The greater the position of the criminal the greater the need for such an example as will strike the imagination of the world and show that humanity has ceased to be the sport of despots. The Laird of Auchinleck told Johnson that Cromwell "gar'd kings ken that they had a lith in their necks." It was a useful lesson. It has been rich in the fruits of freedom. The world will be all the better if, after the war, there is another reminder that the divine right is an antiquated folly, that kings can only be tolerated as expressions of the popular will, and that if they offend against the laws of humanity they must pay the penalty like any other criminal.

This is a matter which is as vital to the neutral countries as to the belligerents. In a sense, it is more vital to them; for if there is no moral law in the world, if the law of might is to take us back unchallenged to barbarism, it is the small countries which will be the chief sufferers. For this reason I am glad to see that the movement for action on the lines I have indicated is coming from neutral quarters. Senor Perez Triana, who represented Colombia at the last Hague Convention, has already called for the punishment of the criminal acts of this war according to the common criminal code. That is a direction in which the opinion of neutral

countries, and especially of the United States of America, should be mobilised. It is in this direction that the world can most effectively repudiate the Prussian doctrine that the state is above the law and re-establish in human society the authority of moral and legal bonds.

In closing his remarkable estimate of the Kaiser, written in 1891, the Portuguese poet, Eça de Queiroz, said: "He boldly takes upon himself responsibilities which in all nations are divided among various bodies of the state—he alone judges, he alone executes, because to him alone it is (not to his ministers, to his council, or to his parliament) that God, the God of the Hohenzollerns, imparts his transcendental inspiration. He must therefore be infallible and invincible. At the first disaster—whether it be inflicted by his burghers or by his people in the streets of Berlin, or by allied armies on the plains of Europe—Germany will at once conclude that his much-vaunted alliance with God was the trick of a wily despot. Then will there not be stones enough from Lorraine to Pomerania to stone this counterfeit Moses. William II. is in very truth casting against fate those terrible 'iron dice' to which the now-forgotten Bismarck once alluded. If he win he may have within and without the frontiers altars such as were raised to Augustus; should he lose, exile, the traditional exile, in England awaits him—a degraded exile, the exile with which he so sternly threatens those who deny his infallibility. . . . In the course of years (may God make them slow and lengthy!) this youth, ardent, pleasing, fertile in imagination, of sincere, perhaps heroic, soul, may be sitting in his Berlin Schloss presiding over the destinies of Europe—or he may be in the Hotel Métropole in London sadly unpacking from his exile's handbag the battered double crown of Prussia and Germany."

It was a picturesque forecast, based on a very just

reading of the young monarch. But it was vitiated by one fact. It left the criminal out of the calculation. Twenty-four years later we can correct the forecast by the light of crimes against humanity that have no parallel in civilised history. Had De Queiroz penetrated to this dark region of the Kaiser's character he would not have limited his destiny to a universal throne or a lodging at the Hotel Métropole. He would have included in its possibilities the dock and the scaffold.

KING ALBERT

AND THE TRAGEDY OF BELGIUM

When the nightmare has passed and men look back with astonishment at the days when earth was hell, there is one episode that will stand out conspicuous even amidst the universal horror. It is the ruin of Belgium. There is no parallel in history to the fate that has befallen that unhappy country. There is no crime in history comparable with that crime. Peace will come again, punishment will be exacted, and the oblivion of time will heal many wounds, but neither peace nor time nor penalty will wipe out the stain of Belgium from the soul of Germany. That is indelible—that can never be forgotten and never be forgiven. It condemns Germany to eternal obloquy, and places the Kaiser among the great criminals of the human race.

We are too near the tragedy and have our minds filled with too many anxieties to be able to measure this vast wrong. We see it only in fragments as an incident of the great struggle in which the destiny of the whole world is at stake. We watch the sad stream of the homeless that disembarks at Folkstone, the piteous crowds that stand at Charing Cross, aimless and helpless, incapable even of communicating their wretchedness, the throngs that gather around the General Buildings in Aldwych as a beacon light in the darkness that has overwhelmed them. But these are only the fortunate. They have escaped from the desolation that was once their country. They give no measure of the immeasurable woe.

Albert

To conceive that inconceivable thing we must think of Belgium in the terms of our own land, we must see England from Hull to Brighton swept by a tidal wave of destruction, the towns in ashes, the industry paralysed, the fields a waste, the population dead or scattered, the government in exile, London in the hands of the enemy and cut off from the world. We must see that forlorn procession from Antwerp, surely the most tragic in history, wandering in the wet autumn days over the levels of Holland—the whole population of a great city fleeing at foot's pace they know not whither from the terror that is in possession of their homes. We must see Brussels silent under the iron heel of the invader, its people, rich and poor alike, kept alive by soup kitchens, its brave Mayor in prison, its liberties gone, its people hardly daring to breathe lest the "frightfulness" that has laid waste Louvain, Termonde, Dinant, and a score of other happy and thriving towns descend upon it. We must see what all this means in the terms of individual misery—hunger, bereavement, homelessness, families stricken with every woe that can afflict humanity, a whole nation left naked to the wolves.

I had never thought a time would come when I should look on the soldier's uniform with envy, and when my one grievance against the year of my birth would be that it forbade me to join the throng outside the recruiting office. But, then, I never thought that this fair earth would become a hell, that a time would come when to awake in the golden light of September mornings would be to awake to a sense of universal desolation and death that darkens the sun and makes the peaceful routine of other days seem almost unbearable. The sunshine that floods the quiet English countryside as I write floods too poor stricken Belgium and the fair land of France, floods the ravaged towns and the burning villages

and the trampled cornfields where the dead lie more thick than the sheaves of corn.

But it is not the dead who make it so hard to sit idle. The soldier has his compensations. There is joy in battle and peace in death; but think of the old and the young, the women and the helpless fleeing before this unimaginable horror, cowering in cellars, starving in woods, their homes in ashes, their husbands and fathers and brothers gone they know not where, and every moment an age of nameless fear. I see in the scene described by Mr. Percy Philip all this vast tragedy summed up in one pitiful picture—the three fearful peasants digging the hurried grave of the woman whom they had found with a bullet wound in her head. They did not know her name or whence she had fled or what was her tragic story. All that they knew was that they had found her, like so many more, dead in the red wake of the tempest. See in her the image of Belgium, the image of France, and we have some measure of this universal woe.

Or take those scenes described in *The Times* of the same day by Mr. A. J. Dawe. He and his friend are captured by a German troop which is on its way to destroy the village of Steen-Ocker:

"We turned off into the main street of the village, and were made to hold up our hands and taken to the far end of the street. Here we were covered by a couple of soldiers armed with revolvers. Close to us in the middle of the road was stationed a Maxim gun ready to mow down the inhabitants if they resisted the burning of the village. For three terrible hours we had to stand there watching the destruction that began at the other end of the street. The men who were guarding us told us that from certain houses shots had been fired by the civilians during the morning upon a

passing German troop and that several Uhlans had been killed.

"They began upon the houses from which the shots were supposed to have been fired. These houses were soon splitting with fire and shooting up great flames. Here and there the fire soon spread along the whole street. The women and children were herded together and set aside. We heard the quick sounds of rifle shots as the escaping civilians were picked off."

He is released and reaches the city which was once Louvain—that name that will be branded on the brow of Germany for ever:

"Burning houses were every moment falling into the roads; shooting was still going on. The dead and dying, burnt and burning, lay on all sides. Over some the Germans had placed sacks. I saw about half a dozen women and children. In one street I saw two little children walking hand in hand over the bodies of the dead men. I have no words to describe these things."

No, there are no words for these things. They strike deeper than words, deeper even than tears—strike to that ultimate indignation that has no relief except the relief of action. If the Kaiser and his army should come to disaster, and have to flee, beaten, through the land they have ravaged, they will pay a dreadful reckoning.

Belgium is blotted out. The curtain has fallen upon its tragedy, and behind that curtain the people crouch in terror while the barbarians tunnel the land with mines and turn it into a fortress.

And if the ruin of Belgium stands out in pathetic relief from the general tragedy, the figure of King Albert will be equally distinguished among those personalities which have been thrown into prominence by the catastrophe. The remarkable thing in this colossal struggle

is the absence of the element of personality. It is as though the forces at work are too vast to permit of the emergence of the individual, as though nothing but some collective, impersonal intelligence is capable of manipulating hosts which are beyond the comprehension of the human mind. No doubt also this absence of the conspicuous figure is due partly to the secrecy that invests the war and partly to the fact that the weight of the issues involved is so oppressive that we are in no mood to discuss men. But whatever the cause the truth is that apart from the Kaiser there is no one who dominates the stage in a personal sense. General Joffre is still almost the shadow of a name, a man wrapped in impenetrable silence, but a man nevertheless whose deeds are beginning to pronounce a golden verdict upon him. Sir John French is justifying the confidence universally felt in his genius, but he too seems almost lost in so vast a theatre. For the rest the Grand Duke Nicholas, von Hindenberg, and von Kluck have become names—have conveyed to the public that subtle feeling of distinction which is the mark of personality.

There is, however, only one figure who has touched the imagination of the world by the qualities of humanity and heroism. The King of the Belgians has won the hearts of men as few kings or subjects ever win them, and whatever the result of the war he will be the symbol of its human and chivalric aspects, just as the Kaiser will be the symbol of its barbarities and ambitions. If Europe effects its deliverance from the peril that overshadows us it will owe the fact largely to the unparalleled sacrifice of Belgium and the heroic inspiration of Belgium's king. None of those who have any reserves about kingship need have hesitation in making this confession, for King Albert is a king after our own heart—the civic head of a free people.

Not long ago the name of the King of the Belgians was a name of evil import. Leopold II., in his vices, ambitions, and magnificence, played the rôle of the *grand monarque* on a tiny stage. He belonged to the tradition of François I., Henry VIII., and Louis XIV., and had he been cast for a bigger part in sovereignty, his masterful, aggressive, and conscienceless spirit would have plunged Europe in trouble. His passion for splendour was largely at the root of the infamy of his rule in the Congo. Men were tortured in the rubber forests of the Congo that he might ape magnificence and build great palaces of empire at home. And his contempt for the poor was as flagrant as his domestic tyranny and his private scandals. At his death M. Vandervelde pronounced on him one of the most terrible verdicts ever passed upon a King. "We have tried," he said, "to find in this long reign of forty-four years one act of goodness, of mercy, of charity. Alas, we can find nothing."

There was never a more striking change in personality than that achieved when his nephew, Albert, the son of the Count of Flanders, came to the throne. Like his uncle, King Albert is a man of great stature and masterful will; but there the likeness ends. So far from playing the grand monarch he is the best type of the citizen king that Europe has yet produced. M. Waxweiler, the economist of the Solvay Institute at Brussels, who was King Albert's tutor and who is still privileged with his close friendship, gave me long ago a pleasant picture of the plain and homely life and the eager social interests of this remarkable man. Pomp and circumstance are entirely alien to his democratic spirit, and it is a popular saying that when he ascended the throne he did so "with his wife and children." Mr. MacDonnell, in his Life of the king, relates in this connection a pleasant incident

of the accession. The king's daughter, too young to figure in the procession, was placed at a window with a supply of bread-and-butter. As her father and mother passed by she cheered with the crowds outside, waving, instead of hat or handkerchief, her slice of bread-and-butter. The story may be a pretty journalistic invention, but it is true to the homely spirit of the citizen king. He has reduced the flummery of Courts to their lowest expression, and moves among his people with an easy, unpretentious friendliness, qualified by a modesty that amounts almost to bashfulness. When he and his queen come to England, for which he has a deep affection, they come as plain citizens, put up at an hotel, visit the theatre, go shopping, and vanish without the world being any the wiser.

It is said that a wise man is careful in the choice of his parents. Certainly King Albert was fortunate in his parentage. His father was as remarkable for his capacity as his brother Leopold, but his abilities ran in much nobler channels, moral, æsthetic, intellectual. He was a student of sociology when that subject was still little understood, and his interest in this direction, as also in regard to politics and art, had a profound influence on his son—all the more profound because he had the wisdom to teach by example rather than precept, in the French rather than the Prussian spirit. Both he and his wife—a Hohenzollern, but of a collateral branch of the family that had suffered from the aggression of the Prussian house—had a genuine passion for the public good and a homely simplicity in their domestic ways. In a very real and rare sense they cultivated the art of plain living and high thinking.

From such a school, King Albert emerged with a human and modern outlook perhaps unprecedented in the records of royalty. His uncle's passion was the

greatness of his sovereignty; King Albert's passion is the happiness of his people and the good name of his country. To advance these his whole life has been devoted with extraordinary singleness of aim. His chivalrous spirit brought him into sharp conflict with his arrogant uncle, and the crime of the Congo made the breach final. When the report of the Congo Commission was issued he was so deeply impressed that, disregarding the hostility of the formidable Leopold, he set out for the Congo to see the truth for himself. I have been told that Leopold never spoke to him again. He returned from his investigation in August 1909, and four months later he became king. His accession to the throne was coincident with the wiping out of the blot of the Congo from the record of his country. This directness of personal action has been the dominant note of his career. In order to reign wisely he must know the facts for himself. He knew that the greatness of a country is expressed not in palaces but in the lives of its people, and as heir to the throne he set himself to learn what those lives were like. He worked in the mines, he drove engines on the railways, he mixed with the working classes in all their activities. Nowhere was he better known than among the fishermen of the coast, the revival of whose industry was one of his pet schemes. And the constant theme of his speeches in the Senate and elsewhere was the well-being of the working population of the country. His speech on coming to the throne announced a new national ideal—the ideal of the democratic state. Even the language of his speech expressed that ideal, for he spoke in the Flemish of the poor as well as in the French of the official and educated community. He declared that " the intellectual and moral forces of a nation are alone the foundations of its prosperity," and laid emphasis on the amelioration of the

conditions of labour, on education, and on the care of the poor as the true concerns of statesmanship.

But if the condition of the poor was to be raised, something else was necessary besides sympathy and knowledge. That something was the prosperity of industry and commerce. Now there was one defect in the equipment of his country which, as a sound economist, chiefly disturbed him. Belgium had a great overseas trade and the second port in Europe; but its merchandise was carried in foreign bottoms, chiefly English and German. He saw that this was not merely a source of commercial weakness but also a political menace. That menace came from Germany. Subtly, stealthily, that country was acquiring a predominant influence in the life of Antwerp. Germans were capturing the Chamber of Commerce, the marine insurance business, the control of the banks, the possession of the navigation companies, of the freighting trade, of ship-broking, of everything. Antwerp was becoming a city in which the people were Belgians but the masters were Germans. It was an open boast of the Germans that they possessed Antwerp and would soon possess Brussels also.

To change all this, Albert, while still heir apparent, set himself to emulate the example of Peter the Great, though with a nobler purpose. The establishment of a mercantile marine for his country became the dominant object of his life, and to accomplish it he assumed the disguise of a newspaper reporter and visited the principal ports and shipyards of Europe to carry out his investigations. It was thus that he went to Belfast in 1908. And since his accession he has pursued his purpose with less privacy, for he can no longer pass himself off as a reporter, but not less enthusiasm, as his visit to the United States showed.

Among the many miscalculations of the Kaiser there

was none more fatal than his contempt for this simple unassuming citizen king and his little people. He thought that, willing or unwilling, he could take them in his stride. He would have preferred to have Albert for his friend of course, and he spared no pains to win him with patronage and flattery. He visited the Exhibition at Brussels in 1910, and was welcomed in the Hôtel de Ville by Burgomaster Max, the brave man who four years later was to defy his hosts and to disappear in his prisons. On that occasion the Kaiser made, according to his custom, a speech in extravagant praise of the progress of Belgium—that Naboth's vineyard on which he had set his heart. And we know from the French Yellow Book how when, in August 1913, his plans were ripening and he had finally yielded to the militarists, he, accompanied by Count von Moltke, made his final bid for the support of King Albert. It was then that the young king knew that the storm that had been threatening his country was inevitable and imminent, and he made the choice of a brave man and a great king. Indeed, he had made it already. He knew the Hohenzollerns of Prussia. He knew the ruthless way in which they had snatched Schleswig-Holstein from a junior branch of the family. He knew that he could never buy off that brigand power by surrender—that, whatever his service, the victory of Germany would end the independence of his country. He had no passion for military glory. All his interests were pacific and social, all his hopes centred in the commercial and industrial development of his country. He had studied the military art of course. As a youth of seventeen he had shared the training and discipline of the farmers and tradesmen who were preparing for the rank of officers in the army. He had then given little promise of greatness, for he had none of the precocious brilliancy that is often so illusive

and fleeting. Talent reveals itself early, but character is a later growth, and it was the quality of character by which this shy, lanky youth with his studious and reflective habit was one day to win the admiration of the world. But though he had no warlike enthusiasm, he studied the art of the soldier with the same thoroughness that he gave to all his tasks, and when he became king and saw the cloud gathering in the east, saw that one day his country might have to make the choice between fighting Prussia or passing into ignoble servitude to it, he hastened the scheme of military re-organisation, which was still only half-completed when the storm burst.

His rejection of the Kaiser's overtures was a wound to the vanity of that monarch, but it was not regarded as a serious obstacle in his path. To his essentially theatrical mind the quality and importance of this modest king of a little country were not discernible. It was the first grave blunder in the war. Events have revealed that behind this life of unpretentious industry, domestic affection, and social enthusiasm there is a man cast in heroic mould—a man prepared to see his country laid waste and to die in the last entrenchment with his people rather than surrender the priceless jewel of the freedom of his country. It is said that he fired the last shot in the defence of Antwerp. It may be true. I do not think it is, for the act does not accord with the wholly untheatrical spirit of the man. He would not fire the last shot for show, but he would assuredly die the first or the last death for honour. And whatever the course of the war, whatever the fate of Europe, it is in him that the future will see the most human, the most knightly figure of this Titanic struggle.

It is not wise perhaps at this stage to probe too closely the secrets of those last tragic days at Antwerp; but

when those secrets are revealed the spirit of this man will shine out with a radiance that will glow in the pages of history for ever. Like Grenville of old he cried, "Fight on, fight on," when the day seemed hopeless and the end imminent, and when the hearts of those about him were in despair. He and his people have won an immortality that will be a precious inheritance and an enduring inspiration for humanity. They have given us a new faith in our kind. They have shown us that in the most peaceful and bourgeois people the passion of patriotism can still flame into great deeds, that the soul of man is mightier than all the engines of Krupps, that in the final ordeal there is found in us the deathless spark that defies death. As we think of this scattered and tortured people, crushed at home under the harrow of the invader, wandering in hosts over the plains of Holland, starving—tens of thousands of them—on the sea shore at Flushing, we do not know whether the deepest feeling that surges in us is pity for their sorrow or pride in their glory. But this we know, that the sorrow will pass, but that the glory is fadeless.

And to us in England, how deep is the debt we owe them, King and people alike. They have drunk the cup of bitterness for us. How easy it would have been for them to have made craven terms with the bully, to have bartered their honour and their liberty for their lives and their possessions. And how vast a difference that would have made to our task, to the course of the war, to the fate of the world, to the liberties of all free peoples. It is that thought that makes the loss of Antwerp so keen a blow, and leads us to rejoice in that last effort of Mr. Churchill to save it. He is assailed for that effort by his critics, and it is probably true that in this, as in other cases, he went outside the proper functions of his office. But, putting that consideration aside,

Mr. Churchill's action was splendidly justified. He saw Antwerp slipping away and heart and brain leapt to a call as urgent and imperative as any ever made to a nation. The Seventh Division of the British Army, which had been commissioned to save Antwerp, was delayed. Why it was delayed so long is not yet clear, and it may be doubted whether, in any case, it was adequate for the purpose. At last it was despatched from Southampton, but Antwerp was now nearing the last gasp. If it could hold out a few days longer it might still be saved; but how was it to hold out? The army was worn out by ten weeks of unexampled struggle against overwhelming odds. The early cry of "Where are the English?" had given place to despair and indignation. The defences of the city, which had been supposed to be invulnerable, were breaking down. "Why should we see Antwerp reduced to ruins?" was the question on many lips. "Every place we have defended is destroyed. Brussels, which we yielded, is saved. Why should we sacrifice Antwerp for those who give us no help?" I believe I am right in saying that in that dark hour King Albert stood almost alone. "Hope shone in him like a pillar of fire when it had gone out of all others." He resisted the appeal of his ministers to surrender. But still the English did not come. It was at that critical moment that Mr. Churchill gathered his little force of Naval Reserve men and threw them (and himself) into the breach. It was a forlorn hope. The men were raw recruits, ill-equipped, untrained, but they were the first visible assurance that Belgium had had that she was not deserted. The effect on the Belgians, as those who were present on the memorable Sunday when the first contingent arrived have told me, was electrical. And but for a further delay in the transport of the Seventh Division, the miracle would perhaps have

been accomplished and Antwerp saved. But the unlucky Seventh Division had been held up at Dover owing to fear of mines, and when at last it was on the march Antwerp had fallen. Mr. Churchill's effort had failed, but it was as wise as it was chivalrous, and when the time comes for the story of the fall of Antwerp to be written, it will be found that some one blundered, but that it was not the man who tried to save it.

No one doubts to-day that King Albert was right in staking everything on the possession of Antwerp. It may be that the historian will pronounce a severe judgment on the Allies for their neglect of Belgium in the early phase of the struggle, and that, not on moral, but on military grounds. The moral claim was, of course, overwhelming. It was the defence of the neutrality of Belgium which was the immediate purpose of our intervention. But there is a widespread feeling that the military claim was equally great, and that had Antwerp and the Belgian coast been strongly held the position of the German right would have been seriously endangered. It was, I understand, the wish of the British War Office to send the British Army to Belgium, and the advantage of having the Belgian coast as a base is obvious. But General Joffre's strategy did not, of course, emerge from the interests of either Belgium or England. His sole aim was to defeat the enemy, and neither moral nor sentimental considerations have ever interfered with his action. He wanted to shorten his line, and the British Army had to conform to his strategy, with the result that the Belgian Army was left unaided and Antwerp fell.

With the capture of that great seaport Belgium ceased to exist. But its surrender affected much greater interests than even those of Belgium. It was the most important success which Germany had had in the war,

and it made a profound impression not only on the belligerent countries but on the general opinion of the world. It was one of the facts which turned the scale in Turkey, where the peace party in the ministry were engaged in resisting the attempts of Enver Pasha to involve the country in the war on the side of Germany. The military consequences of the fall of Antwerp were as serious as the political consequences. The menace to the German flank had vanished, and the enemy were free to extend their line to the Belgian coast and to use Zeebrugge as a submarine base for the coming " blockade " of the British ports by submarine. Antwerp, in fact, became, in Napoleon's phrase, a pistol held at the head of England, a grave obstacle to the ultimate advance of the Allies and an immense asset for Germany to bargain with in the final settlement.

From that moment King Albert was a king without a country, but in losing all he had won immortality and the assurance of ultimate victory. Henceforward he and his people constituted the first charge on the cause of the Allies. We have to save civilisation; but above all, first of all, we have to resurrect the country that lies bleeding across the Channel, almost within sight of our shores. Belgium has died for freedom, for our freedom, for the freedom of the world. Let us see that she rises again triumphant from her tears and ashes. And if righteousness endures beneath the sun, she will rise.

General Joffre

GENERAL JOFFRE

AND THE SPIRIT OF FRANCE

It is more interesting to know what your enemy says of you than what your friends say. It is even more important. For the aim of your friend is to shield you: the aim of your enemy is to unmask you; and though he may be unscrupulous and mendacious in the task he will help you to a truer understanding of yourself than all the adulation of your friends, just as most of the savage caricatures may be more revealing than the most flattering portraits.

Now the enemies of General Joffre call him "General Two-divisions-short-and-Two-minutes-late." It sounds a formidable indictment. If we accepted it *au pied de la lettre*, there would seem to be nothing more to be said, for it would predicate the most complete incapacity for generalship that could be conceived. But while the phrase reflects a certain truth, it reflects it only as the distorting mirror reflects the human form, preserving a sort of grotesque likeness in the midst of its wild exaggerations. The truth which is caricatured may be best expressed by trimming the name to that of General Caution. That, stripped of its malice, is what the phrase means. It means that, in the opinion of his critics, General Joffre's caution is excessive, that he avoids risks that ought to be taken, that he allows opportunities that ought to be seized to pass without profit, that, in the language of Scotland, he is "gey slow in the uptak'."

It is an arguable view on which time alone can give the final judgment. General Joffre would himself probably admit that he is as cautious a general as ever played a great part on the stage of war. The famous phrase attributed to him, about "nibbling" at the enemy ("Je les grignotte"), expresses very truly the spirit of his policy. It is not merely that his genius is static rather than dynamic; it is that his temperament is severely serious and untheatrical. There is a common disease in these days which one may call Napoleonism. It afflicts a certain type of person of great executive capacity and boundless ambition, but little moral ballast or social conscience. It is a very dangerous disease, and any one who surrounds himself with busts of Napoleon is *prima facie* suspect.

From this disease no one is more entirely free than General Joffre, and among the few sayings attributed to him there is none more revealing than that which relates to Napoleon. Some one had said to him that Napoleon himself could not have got through the German lines. "I think," he said reflectively, "that Napoleon would have found a way somehow." That is the right sort of modesty—the modesty of a man who is big enough to avoid vain comparisons and to stand solidly on his own ground. It was said of Campbell-Bannerman, of whom, allowing for differences of race and training, he is reminiscent, that he had talked less nonsense than any man of his time. General Joffre not only talks no nonsense: he thinks none. His habit of mind is plain to pedestrianism, and his view of his profession is as practical as that of a plumber. No one could be more remote from the military tradition of his country. The tradition of France is the tradition of the romance of war just as the tradition of Prussia is the tradition of the business of war. Frederick the Great prided himself

on the fact that, while his French opponent took the field with a hundred cooks, he took the field with a hundred spies. Even Napoleon, though no more forgetful than Frederick of the business of war, knew how to exploit its "glory" and to fire his soldiery with histrionic appeals to their imaginative and romantic sense.

Now General Joffre, although he was born in the hot South, is as dour as a Scotch elder, as unemotional as Wellington or Washington. There is, I think, only one recorded address by him to his army. It was that which he made when, after the famous retreat from Charleroi, his army had taken up the position on the Marne. It was the crisis of the war, and Joffre spoke the one public word that has fallen from his lips. It was characteristic in its directness and brevity. "You must be prepared to die rather than yield ground. Weakness will not be tolerated."

This phlegmatic, undemonstrative temper is significant of much. It shows that General Joffre is not out for popularity, has no Napoleonic designs. That, as will be seen later, is a fact of profound importance. It is significant, too, of the change that has come over the whole spirit and method of war. The art of war is governed by the material of war, and the discoveries of recent years have revolutionised the conception of the art. The element of surprise has vanished with the use of the aeroplane, wireless, and the telephone. The wonderful Ulm-Austerlitz campaign of Napoleon would have been impossible with the conditions of to-day. Equally impossible would have been Stonewall Jackson's march by the plank road that won the Battle of Chancellorsville, or his brilliant exploit at Thoroughfare Gap.

We have seen again and again, in the course of this war, how difficult it is, even with the most rigorous

suppression of news, for a commander to effect a vital movement in secret, unless one side has an overwhelming advantage in military railways as is the case with Germany on the Polish frontier. The transfer of the English army from the Aisne to Flanders was carried out with the most elaborate precautions; but in vain. The Germans were there as soon as the British. Moreover, the enormous development in artillery has not only made the fortress obsolete, but has changed the character of fighting in the open from a swift clash of infantry and cavalry to a slow struggle for entrenchments. Add to all this the gigantic scale of the armies and the vast line of battle, and it will be seen that the art of generalship has fundamentally changed. You could walk over the field of Waterloo in a morning, but it would take you many weeks to walk over the field of battle that extends from the Vosges to the Yser. When Napoleon ordered the advance of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, he had the whole field of battle and all the conditions in view; but the French advance at Soissons in March was only part of a scheme which included the English advance at Neuve Chapelle, a hundred miles away, and considerations as remote as the situation in Alsace and Hindenburg's new lunge at Warsaw from the north. The corollary of this is that the commander is no longer a personality, but an abstraction—not a visible inspiration, but a thought working in some remote background, with maps and telephones, aeroplanes and wireless. General Joffre's greatness is shown in his appreciation of the new conditions, and his stern rejection of the old ostentation of generalship which was proper to "a creed out-worn."

But the main significance of this aloofness and sobriety goes deeper than this. The temper of General Joffre reflects a profound change in the spirit of France.

Like Lord Kitchener, the French Commander had his first experience of war in the tragic year of 1870, when, as a lad from the Ecole Polytechnique, he did active service with a battery during the siege of Paris. How deeply the iron of that terrible winter burned itself into the soul of France is evident in the stress of to-day. Every observer agrees in commenting on the changed temper of the country, its freedom from excitement and alarms, its quiet gravity as of a nation steeled to endure the worst blows of fortune.

How different it all is from the levity of 1870, when France danced out gaily to the cry of "à Berlin!" and in a few short weeks saw her armies shattered by a series of defeats hardly paralleled in history. Even in the midst of that frightful overthrow, the spirit of Paris was true to its past. It plunged into a revolution and swept away the shoddy structure of Imperialism; but even in that thrilling time it mingled a wild and irresponsible gaiety with its panics and despairs. It laughed at its miseries and greeted the surrender of Bazaine with a great Boulevard jest: "Bazaine a enfin opéré sa jonction avec MacMahon!" they said. And in the midst of the siege all Paris could make a joke of General Trochu and his famous "plan"—that plan which he would never reveal, but which was to work a miracle, and which he had deposited with his notary, Me. Ducloux. The whole city laughed about it, and sang songs deriding it thus:

"Je sais le plan de Trochu,
Plan, plan, plan, plan, plan!
Mon Dieu! Quel beau plan!
Je sais le plan de Trochu:
Grace à lui rien n'est perdu,

Quand sur du beau papier blanc
Il eut écrit son affaire,

Il alla porter son plan
Chez maître Ducloux, notaire.

C'est là qu'est l'plan de Trochu,
Plan, plan, plan, plan, plan," etc.

Bismarck, waiting grimly outside, was sure of his estate; but Paris would not be denied its laugh, even though it was at its own misfortunes and its own preposterous Generals. Perhaps young Joffre joined in the laugh too, but he learned the lesson of that gigantic frivolity, and France learned it with him. It is to-day the most serious nation in Europe. The rôles are reversed. It is Germany which is filled with boasting and which set out with the cry of " à Paris "; it is France which waits the issue, with white lips, perhaps, but with a still tongue and a fixed purpose. It has lost its gaiety, but it has found its soul.

And General Joffre is a symbol of the victory. I think he is an assurance, too, that France will keep its soul. For his importance is not confined to the battle-field. Behind the immediate issue of the war of the nations are many issues affecting many lands. Who shall say what influences will emerge triumphant in this country, in Germany, in Russia, in France? Everywhere we see new hopes blossoming—nowhere more than in France where the school of Clericalist reactionaries, Barres, Bourget, Dimnet, and others, are busy anticipating that the war will bring the downfall of the Republic, and that with the army victorious and under their control they will at last have the democracy well in hand. The political struggle in France has always centred in the army, for the Clericalists know that if they can possess the army, as the Kaiser and his Junkers possess it, Parliament, like the Reichstag, will cease to be the instrument of power. It was the exposure of the

Dreyfus conspiracy that prevented the fall of the Republic nearly twenty years ago, but since then the attempts to capture the army for the Clerical cause have not ceased, and there have not been wanting many signs of its success. The restoration of the notorious Colonel de Paty du Clam, the anti-Dreyfusard, to office, and the revival of military parades in the streets of Paris, were not the least significant of these symptoms.

Through this atmosphere of political intrigue, General Joffre has come slowly to the front—a silent, determined man, given wholly to his profession, famous as an engineer and scientist, having seen service in the East and in command of the expedition to Timbuctoo. Though not a politician, he was known as a Republican and a Freemason, and it was not until the régime of General André at the War Office had destroyed the Clericalist patronage in the Army that he obtained the epaulettes of a brigadier-general. When the Council of War was reorganised in 1911, he was made Chief of the General Staff, General Pau, who is a well-known Clerical, having first refused the post, whether on grounds of age only, or because he would not accept the conditions which accompanied the office, is not quite clear. But whatever the cause, the result was that when the crisis came a Republican was in command of the Republican army.

It is a good omen for France—all the better because General Joffre is too good a Republican to allow political motives to interfere with his duty to the State. The spirit in which he conceives his office, as well as the ruthlessness of his hand in dealing with incompetence, was revealed soon after his appointment as head of the army. France was staggered one morning to learn that five generals who had been found incompetent in manœuvres had been dismissed. The fact that all five were

known to be Republicans naturally suggested that they had fallen to a Clericalist conspiracy, and public indignation, passing over General Joffre, seized on his Clericalist assistant, General de Castelnau, as the culprit. But the action was Joffre's, and his alone. He believed the men to be inefficient soldiers, and the fact that they were Republicans had nothing to do with the case. They must go.

That is the man. Cautious, self-reliant, indifferent to applause, careless of criticism, slow to arrive at a decision, but, the decision once taken, "fighting it out on that line" with the grim tenacity of Grant. "No weakness will be tolerated." We see the qualities of the man all through the campaign—at the beginning his authority menaced by political intrigues, but fighting them down with masterful hand and emerging unchallenged autocrat of the army; carrying out his scheme of retreat to the Marne with inflexible purpose and refusing to allow the very considerable victory at Guise to modify his plan; avoiding the failures of 1870 by giving the fatal fortresses a wide berth; allowing the whole of Northern France to be wasted rather than meet the enemy except under his own conditions; when the tide had been checked, never losing his head or sacrificing his scheme of slow attrition to a theatrical move; a man with a long vision, a calm mind, and a will of iron—three good things in a man of action.

Few men in history have been subjected to such an ordeal as that which came during the unforgettable fortnight that followed the retreat from Charleroi. Day by day the tide of invasion swept nearer Paris. The Meuse and the Sambre were crossed, the line of great fortresses along the frontier was engulfed, wave followed wave with seemingly resistless impetus. Each bulletin recorded with cold formality some new advance. Soon

Paris itself heard the guns, and in the woods not far to the north of the city patrols of Uhlans were to be seen, the first messengers of the coming terror. No, not the first, for the aeroplanes of the enemy were before them. To appreciate the effect of all this, it must be remembered that the French public had looked for success, believed in the fortresses, knew nothing of strategy. They knew still less, if that were possible, of the man who had the fate of the country in his keeping. To the Parisians he was little more than a name. They had seen his bulky figure cantering in the Bois and down the Champs Elysées in company with his two step-daughters, but only the initiated had seen in him anything more than a superior officer of unknown name and rank. Even the initiated might have been excused for entertaining fears, for what was there in the record of this man to give that popular assurance of victory that means so much?

There was no fact on which to hang a legend, no anecdote that gave a clue to character. Born among the mountaineers of Roussillon in the Pyrenees, the son—one of eleven children—of a cooper of Rivesaltes, he was as remote in tradition and temperament from the France of Paris as the fisherman of Loch Erribol is from the Englishman of Balham or Putney. His native speech was not French, but a dialect akin to the Catalan speech on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees. He had, through his gift for mathematics, got his foot on the ladder at the Ecole Polytechnique, and he had slowly climbed the ladder till now, a man of sixty-three, he was supreme. But there was not a sensation or a dazzling incident in all his career. Only once (for though he was in one of the forts during the investment of Paris in 1870-71 he saw nothing of the field operations) had he been under fire, and that only when he led his little

column of 400 men (chiefly natives) through 500 miles of desert and wilderness by the Niger to Timbuctoo and overcame the warlike tribes of the Touareg. It was a remarkable achievement, as a perusal of his very simple unaffected story of *My March to Timbuctoo* will show. But it was a small apprenticeship for the command of millions. Nor was there anything peculiarly attractive in his personality to distinguish him. He had no gift of words, and no arts of the adventurer. He was said to be lazy, and his entire lack of showy qualities made his progress incomprehensible to people who had known him superficially, and who, judging from externals, saw little in him. It was only those who knew this silent enigma intimately and were able to see behind appearances who understood his worth—his incomparable common sense, his cool judgment, his essentially scientific and practical genius, his strength of will which would have been a dangerous obstinacy had it not been informed by such a spacious understanding of the factors involved and such a decisive instinct for the essentials of a situation.

But Paris knew nothing of this. It only heard vague rumours of that great defeat to the east near Metz, only saw the French army in the north retreating, almost in flight, day by day, only felt the doom approaching with frightful swiftness. The faith in Joffre, unsustained by knowledge of the man, was vanishing. Was he after all only another Bazaine? It was a moment when the artist of war would have made a dramatic stroke at all costs "to stop the rot." In the mood of the public and of the army this appearance of overwhelming disaster might be instantly fatal to him. And it was in this moment that Joffre showed that France had found the man she needed. It is said, I do not know with what truth, that he was opposed to the earlier strategy of the war. Certainly that strategy does not

accord with all that we know of the cautious temper of the man. It had in it an element of recklessness, a subservience to political aims, that contrasts strikingly with all that has happened since. Being inferior both in numbers and equipment the French were in no position to take the offensive, yet they took the offensive in no fewer than three directions — in Alsace against Mülhausen, in Lorraine against Metz, and against the German centre in Luxemburg, upon which 500,000 men were flung. The result was disastrous. On August 20th, the French suffered a severe defeat near Metz, and on the 22nd the attack on the German centre had collapsed. Meanwhile Namur fell, and on the Sambre the French and British left felt the shock of the German offensive through Belgium, and on the 23rd were in full retreat from the line Charleroi-Mons. The failure of the French centre has been explained with ruthless frankness in the official French record of the war. It was due to "individual and collective failures, imprudences committed under the fire of the enemy, divisions ill-engaged, rash deployments, precipitate retreats, premature waste of men, the inadequacy of certain troops and the incompetence of their leaders in the use of both infantry and artillery." It is a terrible indictment, and the failure in generalship led to a complete change in the chief commands. But can it be doubted that the fundamental mistake was in the strategy which squandered an inferior force on a series of daring offensive movements? It is hard to believe that the cautious Joffre was the author of that scheme. It has much more the stamp of political expediency than of that calculating prudence that is the characteristic of the commander-in-chief.

But whatever the truth about this, the authentic Joffre emerged with the great retreat. That revealed a man with the rare courage to do an unpopular thing

in circumstances of unprecedented trial, and to do it unflinchingly. The brilliant thing had failed, whether it was his own or another's: now he needed the higher courage to do the thing that looked to waiting Paris like complete disaster, and to do it thoroughly. Step by step he gave France up to be ravaged and desolated; night by night he issued his bulletin that told the truth to the anxious citizens—told it without one word to qualify its terrible import. Then, on the position he had prepared on the Marne, with his hidden reserve at hand, with the enemy's communications dangerously extended, with his own line resting on Paris and Verdun, he called the halt and issued the most momentous order in the history of war. And from that day the cause of the Allies was slowly retrieved. The strategy that wrought the change was not original. The lessons of 1870 had been learned, and the doctrine of the retreat had been much discussed. But the discussion of that doctrine was one thing: the capacity to carry it into effect with steady disregard of all the sentiment to the contrary and amidst all the agitations of that terrible time was the achievement of a man of rare genius, but still more rare character. It discovered Joffre to France, and gave it that confidence in his generalship that has never since been questioned.

Fortunate for France that, the most celebrated French soldier since Napoleon, he is free alike from Napoleonism and Clericalism. For when the war is over he will be the supreme figure in the Republic. He will have something of the power that General Monk had when the sceptre of the great Protector had fallen to the nerveless hand of Richard Cromwell and the State was subservient to the Army and the Army to its chief. It will be the moment for a *coup d'état*, and in that moment France will have reason to be grateful that in her supreme

necessity her fate was in the hands not only of a great soldier, but of a faithful citizen. For the dream of this plain son of the mountains, with the frank and kindly smile and transparent blue eyes, is not of political power, but of loyal service to the Republic, followed by the repose of "the peaceful shepherd." He has himself confided to M. Arthur Huc, his friend since boyhood, what his dream is like. A lover of the country, he looks forward to the possession of a small vessel which will carry a crew of two, his wife, and a couple of friends. On this they will spend the fine weather navigating the rivers with no end in view but the enjoyment of the beauty of the scenery, the seduction of the sky, the freshness of the nights. It is the dream of a wise man and a healthy mind. May it soon be realised.

THE ASQUITH CABINETS

AND THE SPIRIT OF ENGLAND

I. THE COMING OF THE STORM

No one who was in the House of Commons on August 3 will ever forget the emotions of that tragic day. The storm that had come up from the East had burst so suddenly that men were still stunned by its impact. Only a fortnight before the sky of Europe had seemed cloudless. The murders at Serajevo on June 28 had created a momentary sensation and then had been forgotten in the tumult of the domestic conflict that was approaching a crisis. That conflict was the final stage of the struggle which was foreshadowed by the election of 1906, and which began in earnest with the Budget of 1909. From that episode onwards there had been no pause in the hostilities which, with the passing of the Parliament Act, had culminated in the long-delayed battle over Home Rule.

At every stage of the conflict the tension increased, and in March there occurred the sinister episode of the Curragh Camp, which, for the first time for centuries, threw the shadow of the sword over Westminster. The courage and address of Mr. Asquith had averted the immediate peril, but had not decreased the gravity of the general situation, and the air was full of the growing menace of civil war in Ulster—a menace propagated by a section of the press and endorsed by some of the opposition leaders. As July advanced Parliament and the country alike were absorbed more and more by the drama that seemed about to plunge Ireland in rebellion. Every

eye was fixed on Ulster and hardly a glance was cast eastwards. An Englishman who was in Berlin during the week beginning on July 18 has told me how puzzled he was, in that electrical atmosphere, to notice the unconsciousness that the English press exhibited of the significance of events on the continent. It is true that until the middle of that week no attention was paid in the London newspapers to the Austro-Serbian situation, and it was not until the night of the 23rd that serious alarm was really awakened by the news of the ultimatum. The next day the Ulster issue had a rival in the public mind, and during the following week it receded into the background as the new peril grew with hourly significance. Day by day Parliament met under a deepening shadow. It knew nothing of the tremendous struggle that was going on behind the scenes—the struggle subsequently revealed in the thrilling pages of the White Paper—but it knew the fate of Europe was in the balance, and when, on the Thursday, in answer to a question by Mr. Bonar Law as to the situation, Mr. Asquith rose and in one brief sentence declared it to be "most grave," its mind was prepared for the worst.

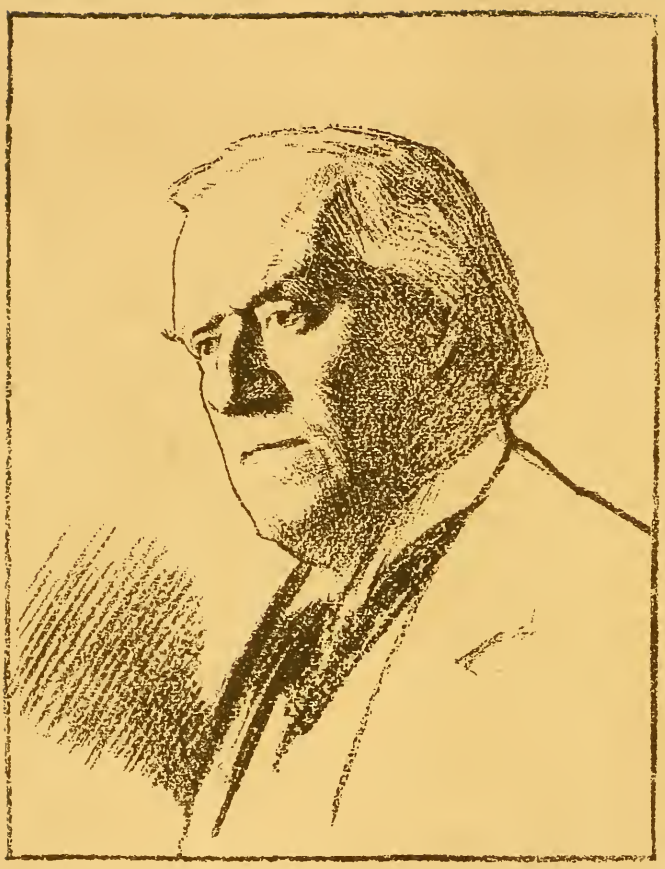
And now on Monday, August 3, it had assembled to hear the fate of this country in the general calamity. It was a beautiful summer afternoon, and amid the silence of the Chamber there could be heard the muffled sound of the traffic of the city outside. It was the last day of the great peace, and even now, though war had already broken out on the continent and the Stock Exchange was closed, London seemed to be occupied with its normal activities. Except for the crowds in Palace Yard and the unusual throng in the outer lobbies, there was little to indicate that the greatest catastrophe in history had befallen the civilised world. But inside the House the sense of impending doom was like a visible

presence. A strange silence pervaded the crowded benches, and the ordinary preliminaries seemed like the echoes of a dream world that had vanished. Sir Edward Grey was manifestly impatient with the delay. He sat in the midst of the crowded Front Bench, the Prime Minister by his side. His customary repose and detachment had gone. He was flushed and restless, and at last leaned towards one of his colleagues and whispered some urgent instruction. The other moved along the Front Bench to the Speaker, who listened to his message and indicated agreement, and a minute later Sir Edward Grey was on his feet, and for an hour the breathless House listened to what Mr. Balfour afterwards called the most momentous speech that had been made in Parliament for a century. When it was over the House knew that a declaration of war against Germany was only a question of hours. The chapter of the past was closed. The nation was embarked on strange and perilous seas.

It is almost with an effort that we recall to-day what we were talking about so furiously when this thing came upon us. The word "Ulster" seems to be only the echo of

> "Old, unhappy, far-off things
> And battles long ago."

You go into the House of Commons in these days and you are puzzled at the strange peace that prevails. Gone are all the familiar savageries of question time, the fierce debates, the bitter jibes, the scornful laughter. Even the habitual indignation of Sir Clement Kinloch-Cooke at the wickedness of the Government has subsided, and Lord Winterton has vanished with so many more to other fields. Mr. Lloyd George relates how generously Mr. Chamberlain has come to his help, and Mr. Chamberlain says how heartily he is in agreement



with everything that Mr. George has done. Strangest of all is the scene when Mr. Redmond rises and tells of the loyalty of Ireland, of the valour of its volunteers, and of its readiness to relieve the Government of all trouble of defence. There is a storm of cheering from every quarter of the House, and it seems as if in a moment, at one breath of real danger, at the call of a common cause, the Irish question has vanished.

Never in history has there been such a House of Commons. All controversy is hushed and the machine works with a swiftness and smoothness that leaves the oldest parliamentary hand gasping with astonishment at the miracle. If any one rises to ask a question the whole House seems indignant. You feel that if he were to go much further and attempt to obstruct he would be taken out and shot by the unanimous verdict of the Chamber. Votes of a hundred millions pass without challenge. The railways are taken over by the State at a stroke of the pen. Laws affecting the most intimate and vital affairs of everyday life are passed while you wait—literally while you wait. We are having lessons in social legislation that will never be forgotten, and Sir Frederick Banbury himself is silent.

The spectacle that we have witnessed almost daily during the early stages of the war is unexampled in the annals of Parliament. A Minister rises, introduces a Bill, say, for delay in payment of all our debts, or appropriating food-stuffs, or closing public-houses earlier or altogether, moves the second reading, sits down. The Speaker rises, reads the title of the Bill, adds "Those in favour say 'Aye.' . . . The 'Ayes' have it," and descends from the Chair to the floor. The Sergeant of Mace advances from the end of the Chamber, bows twice, removes the mace, returns to his seat, and the House is in Committee. The Chairman of Committee

rises, reads the first Clause—" Those in favour say ' Aye ' —the ' Ayes ' have it "—reads the second Clause—" Those in favour, etc."—and so on to the end, and the Bill is through Committee as rapidly as it can be read. Back comes the Sergeant, and restores the mace. The Speaker resumes his place, murmurs " Say ' Aye '—the ' Ayes ' have it," and the Bill is through the House and on its way to the House of Lords, whence it returns with an expedition quite startling to a Liberal Government. But indeed there is no Liberal Government to-day. There is only one party in the state within and without the House.

II. THE FIRST CABINET

In surveying the situation in England at the close of the first nine months of the war, two features deserve attention, not only because of their importance, but also because of their unexpectedness. One is the entire absence of emotionalism and especially of any tendency to Jingoism on the part of the public; the other is the remarkable confidence shown in the Government. Both proceed in some measure from the one cause. The menace is so overwhelming as to leave no room for the ordinary extravagances of popular feeling or party prejudice. Apart from the licensed perversity of Mr. Bernard Shaw, only one sentiment prevails. The country is satisfied that it is fighting for its existence against the most powerful enemy that ever assailed it, and it is satisfied also that the Government is free from complicity in the crime that is deluging Europe with blood. With the practical good sense that comes with a supreme emergency, it avoids alike the sort of popular frenzy that characterised the progress of the Boer War and the censorious attitude usually adopted towards a Government in war time.

But there is another and more positive reason why the Government commands the confidence of the country. John Bright used to say that war always destroyed the Government that waged it, and the present war may be no exception to the rule. But at the end of nine months of unexampled trial, Mr. Asquith's Administration seems as firmly seated as at any moment in its history. Pitt himself did not possess more authority over the public mind than Mr. Asquith and his colleagues exercise to-day. There are, of course, departmental criticisms on such subjects as the contracting methods of the War Office and the administration of the Press Bureau. There are also the acerbities of Lord Northcliffe and the *Morning Post*, chiefly directed in the one case against Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane, in the other against Mr. Churchill. But these criticisms do not touch the central faith of the country in its rulers. That is absolute, unquestioning, and wholly unprecedented, and it is as marked on the Conservative side of politics as on the Liberal.

If there is an element of surprise in the general satisfaction, it must be remembered that the memories of the South African War are still fresh in the public mind. The history of that war was a record of almost uninterrupted disappointments, military failure, financial blundering, false estimates of difficulties, false methods of handling them—all culminating in the humiliating scandals revealed by the War Stores Commission. The experience of that war was undoubtedly a valuable preparation for the struggle that was to come fifteen years later. It sent the nation to school, chastened its spirit, spread abroad a popular distrust of the cant of Imperialism, and led to a searching revision of the military system of the country. England entered on the European War with a vastly better equipment and

in a much saner spirit than could have been the case without the lessons of South Africa. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the smooth working of the military and financial machine which so astonished the country at the beginning of the war was largely due to the alarms of 1911, which prepared the Government for the handling of the situation when it came three years later.

But when every consideration of this sort has been admitted, the efficiency of the Government remains a matter of general agreement. The boldness of its measures, the promptness with which they were put into operation, the far-seeing scope of its preparations, and the sense of unity and momentum behind its action have impressed the nation profoundly and given it a feeling of security which events have done little to weaken. The extent to which England has provided, not only the material and financial resources of the Allies, but their intellectual energy and initiative is well understood, and there is in no quarter any disposition to refuse to the Government the main credit for the satisfactory course of the campaign.

The capacity of the Asquith Administration in the parliamentary and legislative sphere had, of course, long been recognised, with enthusiasm on the one side, grudgingly and of necessity on the other. But success in the parliamentary sense did not necessarily predicate success in the wholly different tasks of war—might indeed foreshadow unfitness for those tasks. And yet familiarity with the dominating personalities of the Cabinet could hardly warrant any disquiet on the subject, for those personalities have throughout been conspicuous as men of action and of swift adaptibility to new conditions and new problems. It is no reflection upon the general level of the Cabinet, which is unusually high, to say that its force, inspiration, and direction proceed from five only

of the twenty members. These five consist of the Prime Minister, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill, and Lord Kitchener. One might be tempted to add a sixth in the person of Mr. Harcourt were it not that his achievement always seems incommensurate with the sense of latent power that he conveys. He made his first speech in Parliament as a Minister of the Crown, and expectation has waited on him patiently for some demonstration of his father's masterful influence; but it has waited so long in vain that it is disposed to leave his doorstep. But, though he has made little impression on the country, and, indeed, seems indifferent to popular *réclame*, he carries into the Cabinet a personal force and a subtlety of mind that are never neglible. He may be paired with Lord Haldane—an old foe of his in the days of the Boer War—who with equal subtlety of mind and much more activity in public also just fails, in spite of his enthusiasm for the doctrine of "efficiency," to be a first-rate influence on events.

From the five members who may be said to constitute the driving power of the Government, Lord Kitchener may be momentarily detached. He is the soldier, *sans phrase*, who has been introduced into the Cabinet for the emergency and on entirely technical grounds. The remaining four divide themselves temperamentally into two widely different groups. Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey are typical products of the Balliol of Jowett's great day—contemptuous of display and rhetoric, avoiding all demagogic appeals to popular emotion with a sort of academic horror of vulgarity; given to understatement rather than overstatement of their case; distrustful of the idealist and placing their feelings under a ruthless intellectual discipline; commanding respect for their high qualities of character rather than affection for the warmth of their human sympathies. Mr. Lloyd

George and Mr. Churchill, on the other hand, are as popular as music-hall artists, men who love the platform and delight in intimate intercourse with the crowd who rejoice in action rather than in speculation, respond much more readily to emotional impulse than to theory, and approach every issue with an empirical courage that is indifferent to tradition.

It will be obvious from this contrast, that while Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey are the steadying power of the combination, their two colleagues are the sails that give it volition. It is not the least of Mr. Asquith's merits that he has been able to attach to himself and to retain the loyalty of men of such startlingly different habits of mind from his own. The fact is largely due to his remarkable freedom from the vices of egoism and personal ambition. No one ever came to power with less individual assertiveness or in a more personally disinterested spirit. His temperament is naturally easy-going and a little flaccid. He does not care who gets the popular applause so long as the work is done; but he would rather that it was not himself, for he has as little passion for the mob as Coriolanus, or, to take a modern example, the late Lord Salisbury. To some extent, no doubt, his reticence is due to a certain shyness which often assumes a protective shield of cold indifference. That, behind the rather frigid public exterior, he cultivates the sensibilities is known to his friends and has more than once been revealed to the public. He is the only man I have seen break down in the House of Commons under the stress of emotion. It was on the occasion when he announced the final failure of his efforts to bring about a settlement in the memorable coal strike of 1911. And no one who heard his noble tribute to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman could doubt either his sympathy or the candour of his mind. For

during the Boer War his relations with Sir Henry had been extremely strained, and when he took office under him he shared the general distrust of the Liberal Imperialists in regard to one whose simplicity of manner concealed from them the essential greatness of his character, and whose loyalty to a very plain faith was easily mistaken for a phlegmatic obstinacy.

It is the accident of events that has made Mr. Asquith the pilot during the most stormy period of British politics for certainly a century. He is himself, by temperament, the least adventurous of statesmen. His quality is intellectual rather than imaginative, and he is congenitally indisposed to pluck the peach before it is ripe. At no time in his career has he forced issues on the public. He is content to leave the pioneering work to those who like it, and prefers to make his appearance when the air has been warmed. It would be wholly wrong to assume from this that he is an opportunist, or that he is governed by the motions of the weathercock. Nothing, indeed, could be further from the truth. It is simply that he is neither an adventurer, nor a political gambler, nor an idealist; but a plain politician interested only in practicable things and a little indifferent to dreams, even though they are on the point of becoming realities. But once engaged, his mind works with unequalled power. All the resources of the most capacious intellect that has been placed at the service of Parliament since Gladstone disappeared are brought into play with an economy of method, a startling clearness of thought, and a passionless detachment of spirit that give him an unrivalled mastery of the House. "Bring me the sledge-hammer," whispered Campbell-Bannerman on one occasion to his neighbour on the Government bench, and Mr. Asquith was brought. His approach to the dialetical battle is like the massive

advance of an army corps, just as Mr. Lloyd George's approach is like the swift onset of a cavalry brigade. He has himself expressed his agreement with Pitt that the highest virtue of statesmanship is patience, and few men have shown a more abundant supply of that virtue in trying situations. His philosophy of "*Solvitur ambulando*" is often dangerously like a philosophy of Drift. His tolerance of the Ulster conspiracy more than once tested the faith of his supporters, and in the midst of the passions aroused by the passage of the Parliament Act I saw him for nearly an hour vainly endeavouring to speak while Lord Hugh Cecil and the young Tories howled at him like wolves, and throughout all that unparalleled insult he stood with a certain cold scorn, but without one word of anger escaping his lips. He would not stoop even to characterise such an outrage.

But there is one thing that moves him to passion. He has the soul of the lawyer—the reverence for the bond, for constitutional precedent, for international law, for the sacred word of nations. He touches greatness most when he is asserting some abstract principle of government, as, when replying at the Albert Hall to some airy remark of Mr. Balfour that a question of taxation was only a pedantry, he said: "A pedantry! But it was for pedantries like these that Pym fought and Hampden died." And no one who heard that tremendous impeachment of Germany on the day following the declaration of war can ever doubt the fierce passion for fundamental things that blazes beneath this drilled and disciplined exterior.

Mr. Asquith, indeed, is a man whom the emergency has always found adequate to the occasion. His natural tendency to *laisser-faire*, his habit of never facing a thing until it becomes imminent, give the impression of want of force, of lack of fire and flame,

of intellectual indifference to the issue. But in the moment of crisis he envelopes a situation with a sudden and masculine authority that has had no parallel in the House of Commons in this generation. It was so in the case of the famous Curragh Camp episode. A position had been allowed to develop of the gravest menace, not only to the Government, but to the authority of Parliament over the army. The War Secretary had had to resign, the head of the General Staff had refused to continue in office, and the Government seemed in imminent peril. Then, without, I believe, consulting any one, Mr. Asquith came down to the House and announced that he himself would take the War Secretaryship. It was a master stroke that changed the situation in a moment, and the scene that followed—the thrilling shout of triumph on the one side, the visible rout on the other—was as memorable as anything in the annals of Parliament. Among the many German miscalculations in regard to England there was none more disastrous than the misunderstanding of Mr. Asquith. He is slow to anger, but, his indignation aroused, there is in him a concentrated passion and a sense of power that give extraordinary impetus and weight to his onset. And in their open repudiation of law and honour among nations the Germans in his eyes outraged the very ark of the covenant.

If Mr. Asquith's intellectual mastery of the House is supreme, Sir Edward Grey's influence is not less remarkable as a triumph of character. In many respects his equipment is undistinguished. He has travelled little—it is jocularly said that he paid his first visit to Paris when he accompanied the King there a short time ago—he is not a linguist, he is wholly insular in his tastes, almost unknown in society, much more devoted to fishing than to politics, speaks little and then in the plainest

and most unadorned fashion, is indifferent to the currents of modern life and turns for his literature to the quietism of Wordsworth, Walton, and White's *Selborne*, is rarely seen in the House, and then seems to stray in, as it were, like a visitor from another planet. And in spite of all this, he exercises an almost hypnotic influence on Parliament. The detachment of his mind, the Olympian aloofness and serenity of his manner, the transparent honesty of his aims, his entire freedom from artifice and from appeals to "the gallery," all combine to give him a certain isolation and authority that are unique. His speech has the quality of finality. Mr. Asquith wins by the directness and weight of his intellectual resources; Mr. Lloyd George by the swiftness and suppleness of his evolutions. Sir Edward Grey wins by his mere presence, and the sense of high purpose and firmness of mind which that presence conveys. He is more advanced in his views and more popular in his sympathies than his manner and speech convey; but in his conduct of Foreign Affairs he has adopted a reticence towards Parliament which has been resented, notably in the case of the Russian Agreement of 1907, which was published two days after the parliamentary session had closed, and also in regard to the nature of the military "conversations" with France first disclosed to Parliament in the speech of August 3 last.

It was a disaster that in the fateful years which led up to the war Germany was represented in England by Count Metternich, whose supple and disquieting manner, full of Machiavellian suggestion, clashed unpleasantly with the direct and simple habit of Sir Edward Grey. Neither could understand the other. Sir Edward could not get behind that elusive exterior, and Metternich could not understand that such plainness as Sir Edward Grey's was anything but a cunning disguise.

A change came when Baron Marschall von Bieberstein superseded Metternich, and when a little later (on the Baron's death) Prince Lichnowsky came with his gentle manner and obvious frankness of purpose. It seemed then, especially with the successful co-operation of England and Germany during the Balkan Wars, that the danger-point in the relations of the two peoples was passed, and Sir Edward Grey was clearly moving with strong hope towards an understanding with Germany. His efforts for peace during the last fatal week of July are on record, and no one who saw him in the House during those thrilling days can doubt either his surprise at the sudden blow or his passionate desire to save Europe from the coming disaster. When some one met him after his speech of August 3 and rather ineptly offered his congratulations he turned away with the remark, "This is the saddest day of my life." I am told that at the Cabinet Council next morning more than one minister broke down under the dreadful strain, and that Sir Edward Grey was among them. But, indeed, there were more tears shed in England in those tragic days then ever before. And they were not tears of weakness, but of unspeakable grief.

If Mr. Asquith is the brain of the Cabinet and Sir Edward Grey its character, Mr. Lloyd George is its inspiration. No matter what the wave that rolls in, he is always on its crest. He is light as a cork, swift as a swallow, prompt as a tax-collector. There is the magic of genius about this glancing, wayward, debonair Welshman who, with nothing but his own native wit and dauntless courage—his sling and his stone, as it were—has stormed the seats of the mighty and changed the whole current of British politics. For ten years the fiercest battle in modern political annals has raged around his crest. All the forces of wealth, influence,

society, and privilege have been mobilised for his suppression, for with a true instinct they have seen in his agile mind, his far-reaching aims, and his unrivalled influence over the democracy the supreme peril to their interests. And at the end of the breathless struggle, when the country is fighting for its very existence, his fiercest foes are loudest in his praise, and the city bankers are, half in jest, but half in earnest, suggesting that his services should be rewarded with a dukedom. The secret of this unprecedented career is not obscure. He is the first real expression of the supremacy of the democracy. Other men have interpreted democracy from without, philosophically, objectively; but here is one who comes hot from its very heart, uttering its thoughts in its own language, feeling its agonies and aspirations with passionate sympathy, making them vivid and actual with the glow of his mind and the swift imaginative illumination of a poetic temperament. All his thought and action come from his direct experience of life. No man of distinction ever carried less impedimenta, or was more free from the domination of the past or the thought of other minds. He lives by vision, not thought; by the swiftness of his apprehension, not by the slow correlation of fact and theory. If he wants to introduce a shipping bill he takes a voyage to study the life of the sailor at first hand; if he wants to know about coal-mining he goes down a coal-mine; if he wants to know what is wrong with casual labour he mixes with the crowd at the dock gates in the early morning to hear with his own ears and see with his own eyes. It is this directness and actuality, this independence of all theory and doctrine, that give him his astonishing volition. He is not encumbered with precedent, but leaps to his own conclusion and flashes to his own goal, careless of all the criticisms of the

learned. He takes his sympathies for his counsellors, and leaves political doctrine to the schoolmen. It follows that his direction is incalculable. It follows, also, that he is least convincing and least convinced when his case rests on a statement of theory. For example, he has made the most brilliant series of political speeches delivered during the past fifteen years, but though the fiscal issue has been one of the prominent subjects of discussion I cannot recall one really weighty contribution that he has made to the Free Trade case.

There is, of course, a peril in this empiricism. It is the source at once of the glamour that invests his movements and the nervous expectancy with which those movements are watched. He is as baffling as quicksilver which is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere. But he has two safeguards. The first is his real passion for the people. With all his success and all his wanderings into high places, his heart is untravelled. It turns unfailingly to the little village between the mountains and the sea from which he sprang, and to the old shoemaker uncle who watched over his childhood and taught himself French that he might pave the way of the boy to the law, and who still lives to marvel at the man who has made a sounding board of the world. That love of the people, sincere and abiding, is his saving grace. It is the only anchorage of that extremely mobile and wayward personality.

And, in the next place, he is not unconscious of the peril of the quality which is at once his strength and his weakness. He has no petty vanity, and though he does not go to text-books he goes to men. On every subject as it arises he gathers round him the best expert minds available, thrashes out the problems over the breakfast table, in committee, on the golf-links, everywhere, and with his easy accessibility to ideas arrives at conclusions

which are usually informed and practical. It is this practice which makes the giddy and daring path that he has followed so secure and so triumphant. And it is this practice also which, during this crisis, has made him the idol of his former enemies. The nation was confronted with an incalculable financial disaster. A timid man hedged round with academic restraints would have brought the city to ruin. Mr. Lloyd George seized the situation with the imaginative courage of a creative mind. The old foundations had gone. He had to extemporise new ones on the spot, and it was a task suited to his genius. A world in commotion is a world in which he is happy, for his passion for adventure is then least subject to restraint. Then he can indulge his delight in action with the least hindrance from severe thought and can drive ahead on the wings of impulse. But such volition needs watching. It may lead to strange places and stranger companionships.

Like Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill, too, is essentially a man of action, though in his extraordinarily various equipment the gifts of abstract speculation and philosophic detachment are not wanting. No one absorbs the atmosphere of a situation more readily than he does, or exhales it with more intellectual conviction, or with a more assured grasp of underlying principles. But though he has a rare power of appeal to the popular mind, his sympathies are not engaged, and his interest in life is essentially the interest of the man of action and adventure. He brings into public life the spirit of the eternal boy, curious, eager, egoistic, intense. His career has been an astonishing hand-gallop through every realm of experience, war, literature, journalism, pleasure, travel, politics, and it is a source of unceasing wonder that with this furious activity of living he has been able to accumulate such stores of ordered thought,

such an air of statesmanlike authority, such mastery of the whole instrument of political life. But through this versatility there runs always the outlook and spirit of the soldier, and he translates all the terms of politics into the strategy of the battlefield. His vision is picturesque and dramatic, and if in the drama of his mind he sees himself a colossal figure touching the skies it cannot be denied that his gifts are equal to his ambitions. He is more admired than trusted, for his amazing energy and impetus are felt to be the instruments of a purpose which is wayward, personal, and autocratic. But if on questions of policy he is regarded with disquiet, in the executive field the powers of his mind, the swiftness and directness of his vision, and the spaciousness of his understanding are invaluable; and it is recognised that to his years of breathless activity at the Admiralty the wonderful preparedness of the Fleet for the great emergency that has come is largely due. His impetus of mind is a great asset, but it needs a powerful control, and there is a widespread view that Mr. Asquith's methods leave him too much latitude for independent action.

The part which Lord Kitchener has played has been purely executive. His introduction to the Cabinet marked a new departure which was disliked by Liberals, but which was based on the wholly unprecedented situation. Lord Kitchener is a legend of strength and efficiency. The extraordinary dominion he had over the popular mind was in itself an asset of the first importance. If Kitchener was there, it was all right. If Kitchener wanted more men—well, more men there must be. It would be an interesting study to examine the growth of the legend and the materials out of which it has been fashioned. There are those who regard it as an interesting myth. Certainly the main credit for

the extraordinary smoothness and rapidity with which the Expeditionary Force was despatched belongs not to Lord Kitchener, whose arrival on the scene was too late to influence the arrangements, but to the war machine created by Lord Haldane, who, for his reward, has been openly assailed in the Conservative press as a pro-German who ought to be out of office if not in the Tower. But whatever the future has to say in regard to Lord Kitchener as an administrator, there is no doubt as to the overwhelming value of his prestige, and the admirable loyalty with which, following his unfailing practice, he refused to allow his unprecedented position to be exploited for political purposes.

There is no space here to deal with the other members of the Cabinet, but something needs to be said on the remarkable coherence that has distinguished it. That coherence is due to the confidence in Mr. Asquith and the spirit of loyalty that is universal in regard to his leadership. But for this fact there can be no doubt that the Cabinet would have collapsed like a house of cards at the shock of the crisis. It came with such appalling suddenness, the decision had to be so instant, and it had to be made by a Cabinet so passionately averse to war that the survival of the Ministry is still a matter for wonder. At first, I believe, it is true to say that none but the inner Cabinet were clear on the subject, and even so late as Sunday, August 2—a day of almost incessant meetings—the dissentients were, if not in a majority, at least so numerous and so powerful that a coalition Cabinet seemed inevitable. But as the position of Belgium became more clear the opposition weakened, and in the end only two members of the Cabinet, Lord Morley and Mr. John Burns, resigned. It was a surprisingly small disruption in the presence of a crisis of such magnitude, and it left the position of

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the Government practically unaffected. This conveys no reflection upon the two dissentients. Neither of them has since made any public utterance on the subject, and we can only speculate upon the motives of their action; but in both cases I think it will be found that the causes of disagreement are to be sought in events anterior to the immediate crisis, rather than in the facts of the crisis itself. In the case of Lord Morley a very powerful factor in his decision had undoubtedly no relevance to the duty of the country in the matter. He was the oldest member of the Cabinet, and for a long time his sensitive temperament had chafed under the strain and irritations of office. When to the general surprise he took a seat in the House of Lords, he did so, as he said in a letter to Spence Watson, for two reasons, because he found the pressure of life in the House of Commons made the fulfilment of the duties of his office too severe a task, and because, being childless, there was no question of a hereditary peerage. It is probable that in any case he would have found himself unequal to the strain of office during a prolonged struggle, and it was natural that, with his life-long devotion to the cause of humanity in its widest and least insular aspects, he should not desire to close his public career amidst the tumult of universal war. The reasons which operated in the case of Mr. Burns are less apparent, and not least unapparent to those who know him best. That he was definitely opposed to intervention is certain; but it is equally certain that there were collateral causes, and among them the indisposition, as the first representative of Labour who had ever sat in a British Cabinet, to being associated with the conduct of a great war.

It cannot be doubted that the survival of the Asquith Ministry practically intact at the time of the crisis was a fact of enormous value to the cause of the Allies.

There was at the beginning of the war much speculation as to the advisability and probability of a coalition Cabinet; but this passed away with the progress of events and the evidence of the extraordinary efficiency of the Government. There were no obvious alternatives on the other side to the men filling the chief offices, and it did not seem possible for the Conservatives to accept simply a number of less important positions. Nor, indeed, did they desire office. Freedom from responsibility left them free to criticise, and free also from the odium which the conduct of a war usually brings upon a Government, however efficient and successful it may be. It is just to them to say that they have exercised their freedom with great restraint. The truce which the war has brought about in party politics has been, so far, on the whole, very fairly observed. There has been no attempt to create difficulties for the Government, and a general and even generous recognition of their success. Moreover, although there has been no official intercourse between the front benches there has been much unofficial consultation. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last Tory Administration, has accepted Mr. Lloyd George's invitation to place his experience at the service of the Treasury, and though he has preserved his full freedom to criticise, he has, with that touch of magnanimity which makes him so agreeable a figure in the public life of the country, cordially and even enthusiastically endorsed the measures which his successor in the chancellorship has adopted.

As to the attitude of the House generally, it is one of almost unquestioning acceptance of the decisions of the Government. There has never been such a reign of absolutism in the land since the days of Stuarts, and the British people, like Robert Clive, may well be aston-

ished at its own moderation—at the obedience with which it has surrendered liberties which it had thought were the breath of its existence, at its whispering humbleness in criticism, at its acceptance of an iron discipline of the press, at the unmurmuring instancy with which it gives whatever the Government asks without as much as requesting details. "We used to have more bother to get a vote for £1000 through committee than we have now to get a vote for £300,000,000," said one of the Government whips to me after Mr. Asquith had asked for the second vote of credit. It would be a mistake to argue from this strange spirit of compliance that the country has undergone any loss of its traditions. It only means that it is overshadowed by a peril that has blotted out temporarily all the ordinary separatisms of society, and that there is a universal disposition to avoid any spirit of nagging or querulousness, and to trust the Government absolutely with its destiny.

III. THE COALITION CABINET

The fall of the Liberal Government is as obscure in its causes as it was sudden. It did not proceed from any gust of public opinion, nor from any sense of failure, nor from any serious demand for a Coalition Administration. The confidence of the nation remained unimpaired and although the attacks of *The Morning Post* and the Northcliffe Press upon individual ministers had increased in bitterness, they did not represent any serious body of national thought or any strong movement within the House. Mr. Asquith himself was known to be averse to a reconstruction of the Cabinet, and only a week before it actually took place he said, in reply to a question in Parliament, that he saw no reason for such

a course, and thought it would not meet with any general approval. But undoubtedly forces of disintegration had been at work. The curious episode in relation to drink and munitions had revealed a singular contrariety of opinion on the subject within the Cabinet. There seems no doubt that Mr. Lloyd George, in raising the incident, over-stated the facts as to the effect of drink on the production of munitions, and when Mr. Asquith went to Newcastle, praised the workmen, declared that there was no deficiency in the supply of munitions, and made no allusion to the drink question, the public mind was puzzled by what seemed like a very direct conflict between the Prime Minister and his chief lieutenant. The situation was not improved by the discussions which were known to be proceeding within the Cabinet on the method of dealing with the drink problem. For a day or two prohibition was in the wind; then came State purchase which for a moment seemed almost like going through; next, as the temperature lowered, came proposals for higher taxes on high percentages of alcohol, a scheme which brought Mr. Lloyd George into sharp conflict with the Irish. Finally, the mountain of discussion brought forth a mouse, or two mice, in the shape of a scheme for controlling munitions areas and the curious Immature Whisky Bill, which no one wanted but which was passed apparently as a sort of evidence that there had been something wrong which called for some sort of demonstration. All this bewildered the country; but it did not seriously disturb its mind. It, however, created an atmosphere congenial to change should events develop in that direction.

And events were not slow to seize the occasion. They came in the form of two personal issues, one concerning the administration of the army, the other the administration of the navy. The Northcliffe Press, whose

agitation had been so largely responsible for the appointment of Lord Kitchener, suddenly turned its guns on him, and, backed by a message from its military correspondent at the front, which seemed to have the authority of the commander in the field, declared that the wrong shells had been sent and that the Cabinet had been kept in ignorance by Lord Kitchener of what was happening about munitions. Both the manner and the source of the attack were deeply resented, but the Opposition made it clear that they intended to raise a discussion on the facts themselves. That would, of course, have meant a formal breach of the party truce. Mr. Asquith had two courses open to him. He could accept the challenge, stand by his Cabinet, and in the ultimate event bring the question of an alternative government to the test by resigning, or he could make terms with the Opposition and evade what he might regard as a dangerous discussion. It is probable that he would have taken the stronger line but for the fact that at this moment the conflict between Mr. Churchill and Lord Fisher, in regard to the Dardanelles expedition, also came to a head with the threatened resignation of the First Sea Lord. Faced with the double problem Mr. Asquith decided on a reconstruction of the Cabinet on coalition lines.

The new Cabinet represents all parties with the exception of the Irish Nationalists. It has exchanged its coherence and its familiarity with its tasks for a national character the value of which is purely speculative. In personnel it can hardly claim to have been seriously strengthened. The main elements are still those of the first Cabinet, and the changes that have been made have not been made with a view to increased efficiency but in order to include men whose claims, under the new conditions, could not be overlooked. The three most con-

siderable personal forces introduced into the Cabinet are Mr. Balfour, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Curzon. Mr. Balfour is the most fascinating and elusive figure in British politics. He is the philosopher in affairs and has been a conundrum alike to his friends and his foes, but never so much a conundrum as when his views were so simple that he could put them on half a sheet of note-paper. His supreme triumph was in keeping the leadership of his sundered party for two years without ever being betrayed into disclosing on which side of the fence he really stood. Such agility, perhaps, has never been seen in the egg-dance of politics. His dialectical ingenuity is a delight to the House, but his grasp of facts is extraordinarily uncertain, and he dwells in a cloud of speculative doubt that seems to have no relation to the world of action. He had before the reconstruction been associated with Mr. Churchill in the work at the Admiralty, and is understood to have been a strong advocate of the first expedition to the Dardanelles. Lord Lansdowne is a distinct gain to the Cabinet. He has large experience of foreign affairs and represents the best traditions of that office. He has wisdom, knowledge, and sound judgment, and should be of real service to Sir Edward Grey in the difficult and complicated diplomacy of the Allies. Lord Curzon is the most interesting introduction. It is his first appearance in a British Cabinet, but his reputation has long been established. He has a powerful mind, great industry, and, in the opinion of so good a judge as Lord Morley, is the master of the best parliamentary style since Gladstone. His administration in India revealed both his virtues and his defects, but the total effect of it was disastrous, for it reflected the spirit of Imperialism in its most flagrant form, and by its adoption of what Fox called the devil's maxim, "*Divide et impera*,"

brought the country to the brink of revolution from which it has been withdrawn by the wise and liberal policy of Lord Morley and Lord Hardinge.

There are many puzzling things in the composition of the new Ministry. The appearance of Sir Edward Carson and Sir F. E. Smith as the law officers of the crown furnishes a certain element of ironic relief. A year before they were heading the "Civil War" in Ulster, and Sir Edward Carson publicly declared his readiness to break every law that stood in the way of his purpose. The poacher has never before made such a dramatic transition to the task of the gamekeeper. Whether the law will be able to survive such a triumphant jest may be questioned. The retention of Mr. Churchill in the Cabinet was a partial victory for him over Lord Fisher. At first it was understood that Mr. Churchill would not be in the new Ministry, and it was known that his retention in any office would mean the retirement of the First Sea Lord, who had come to the conclusion that Mr. Balfour *plus* Mr. Churchill was an arrangement no more favourable to his control of the navy than Mr. Churchill *plus* Mr. Balfour had been.

The flinging of Lord Haldane to the wolves is the outstanding scandal associated with the new ministry. No doubt his retirement was nominally voluntary, but that it should have been allowed to take place was a concession to the basest personal campaign that has disgraced the war. No man had done more, none, indeed, had done so much to prepare the country to meet the peril that overtook it last August. It was he who refashioned the army and created the great territorial machine which, had it been properly used by the War Office, would have saved the country from the waste, confusion, and scandals of the early months. It was he who gave the army the general staff and who

elaborated that scheme of transport which, in enabling the British army to meet the first onrush of the Germans, contributed so largely to saving Europe from an early and overwhelming disaster. But he knew Germany, had studied its philosophy, had made friends with its philosophers, had lunched (as many others, from the King to Sir Edward Carson, had done) with the Kaiser, had even been to Germany in the interests of peace. For all these crimes he was pursued by the rabble of the press with a vulgar yelping of " Pro-German." Decency, to say nothing of gratitude, it would have seemed would have forbidden any surrender to such a squalid crusade. We do not know what efforts Mr. Asquith made to save his life-long friend from being sacrificed. But we know that he did not save him. It is an indelible stain upon his second Cabinet.

IV. THE SHIPWRECK

It is not difficult in these days to understand the emotions of that April night in the Atlantic when the *Titanic* went down. Humanity is passing through a somewhat similar experience. It has struck a rock, and we are all engaged in building rafts—military, social, financial rafts—and putting on lifebelts and saving any little treasure we can from the wreckage. The ship that rode the waves so securely and seemed built for all time and all weathers has gone to pieces like a house of cards at the touch of universal war, and we have to improvise any means we can for keeping afloat. Each of us in our several ways is called upon to face issues that were undreamed of in that light-hearted world we dwelt in but yesterday.

Things went very well then. We had our troubles, no doubt, spoke ill of life and thought we were rather

badly used. Shares showed an incurable tendency to fall, trade was not what it had been, there was that interminable revolution in Mexico — savage, barbaric Mexico: so different from our civilised Europe — and above all there was the shadow over Ireland, with its Gough episodes and its gun-running, to disturb us. But the deck was sound beneath our feet, and our private sorrows and public discontents did not differ in kind from the sorrows and discontents we had learned to regard as a normal condition of this strange adventure of life.

Now we are all swallowed up in a common ruin. The whole machinery of civilisation has been militarised, and from the Orkneys to Japan all the energies of men are turned to the task of feeding the flame of war that is scorching the face of Europe. The social displacement has been so cataclysmal that few of us know what is going to happen to us. I do not; you do not. We are all adrift together. The professions or trades that we have pursued so industriously and perhaps prosperously seem to have little relevance to the armed camp in which we live, and the soldier is the only man to-day who is quite sure that the world of the Christian kings has need of him. " The lordliest life on earth " has taken possession of the earth and Mr. Kipling may contemplate its fruits with what emotion he may. They are many. The dead, I read, lie so thick in Charleroi that they are piled high on the pavements of the streets, " facing earth or facing sky," Germans and French and Belgians lying still in the great comradeship of death, awaiting a common burial. And thousands like them litter the cornfields of Belgium, the marshes of East Prussia, the plains of Sclavonia. They are only the first-fruits of the harvest. And the Kaiser telegraphs to the Crown Princess, " I rejoice with you in Wilhelm's first victory.

How magnificently God supported him." Let him rejoice. When we have victory let us rejoice also. But in the name of that decency which this man outrages, let us keep God's name from our lips in our rejoicing.

But it is not the dead who are the true victims of the shipwreck of Europe. It is the living. From Cape Grisnez to the Urals there is not a home where the shadow of war does not darken the threshold—hardly a home where the breadwinner is seen no more. The great felled trees lie on the hillsides of the Black Forest with none to yoke the oxen and take the shining boles down the valleys to the waterways, and in the Dauphiné the patches of corn that have ripened on the almost inaccessible ledges of the mountains stand uncut, for the bronzed Dauphinois has gone to another harvest field and only the women and children are left to wait and hope and fear. And so over the whole face of the Continent. The manhood of Europe is on the battle-fields and all the sunshine of millions and tens of millions of homes is in eclipse, and all the fruits of happy industry are left to rot or are going to feed the monster that possesses the earth.

It seems a little futile, perhaps, to talk about the future while we are still stunned and struggling. You are not concerned about the theories of watertight compartments when the boat is going down. It is time to discuss them when you have got safe ashore. And in the same way we cannot think of the causes of the catastrophe that has overwhelmed us or of the lessons to be drawn from it while we are still in the suck of the maelstrom. The time for controversy has not yet come—cannot come until the peril has passed and we are free to ask questions and quarrel with each other in the old jolly way. But in the meantime we are going through experiences which will have a profound impres-

sion on human society. When the shipwreck is over and we set about rebuilding civilisation the world will find itself in possession of a most unsuspected stock of ideas. Great movements of thought are always independent of our conscious volition. They are driven, like the tides, by external stimulus, and the events through which we are passing are changing the orientation of thought. You cannot go into the House of Commons in these days without realising that we are passing through an internal revolution as well as a world crisis. We have got right down to the bedrock of things, and all the nice scheme of special privileges, vested interests, private prerogatives, is swept away. The individual has gone under. There is only one life, the life of the State, that concerns us, and Sir Frederick Banbury seems to represent ideas that belong to another state of existence. The only political doctrine extant is the doctrine of the collective necessity. We are discovering that in the face of that necessity we have no individual rights or possessions that the State cannot resume almost without so much as a "by your leave."

A friend of mine saw a milkman with his horse and cart going his rounds the other day in a Midland town. The man was stopped by an agent of the Government, who ran his eye over the horse, approved it, named the price he would give for it, told the owner to take it out of the shafts, and forthwith led it away, leaving the man with his horseless milkcart to complete his rounds as best he could. He had learned rather abruptly the lesson we are all learning in our several ways, that in the ultimate analysis we own nothing and the State owns all. It can take our money to the last penny, it can restrict our liberties until we are little better than prisoners of war, it can appropriate our institutions with a stroke

of the pen, in the final necessity it can take our lives to the last drop of our blood.

We have talked for generations about the nationalisation of railways and have found the scheme too vast to tackle. We woke up one morning to find that the companies had been dispossessed of their control, that the twelve hundred directors had been sent out to play, and that the whole railway system of the country was subject to the Government. And the transition seemed so natural and proper that no one even "wrote to the papers about it." At the impact of a great occasion the whole theory of railway ownership and control collapses without a murmur. It is seen that the sole ultimate function of the railways is to serve the State, and that anything that interferes with that function in a time of emergency is brushed aside as lightly as a feather. The lesson will serve for future use. By a flash of lightning, as it were, it has revealed the true relation of the railways to the community, and that relation is as applicable to conditions of peace as to conditions of war.

And so with many other political phases of this extraordinary time. You may see Parliament constructing a new social fabric while you wait—all on a collective basis. I can almost hear Mr. Sidney Webb purring as he looks on at the swift and silent revolution. War has done more in a week or two to bring his ideas into practice than the industrious propaganda of years. I went into the House of Commons the other afternoon, and in the course of half-an-hour I heard a series of Bills rushed through their several stages without discussion and almost without comment, giving powers to the State which in normal times would freeze the blood of Mr. Harold Cox. There has never been such a political *tour de force* in the history of this land.

And it is remarkable that whatever the subject, the emergency exit is always collectivism. Take the question of finance. Walter Besant said long ago that the art of banking consisted in taking other people's money and using it for your own profit. In a general way we knew that the satire was not very extravagant, but the system worked and there seemed no real conflict between finance which is the symbol and commerce which is the reality.

But the time of stress has brought a swift disillusion. It is found that the private control of the sources of money supply may have disastrous effects upon industry in a crisis—that just when money is most needed for trade it may be withheld for private and even selfish reasons. Many of the banks behaved well, and others behaved badly; but the discovery that any of them could hoard not their own money, but other people's money, and keep it out of use at a moment when its use was the most urgent need of society, showed that the present financial system is false. Already the State has had to come to the relief of the situation. Mr. Lloyd George has given the banks the credit of the national Treasury, that is, the security of the whole nation for their operations. But obviously the matter cannot rest there. If the banks are only institutions for making profits for their shareholders in times of prosperity, and close their purses when the pinch comes, only opening them on our collective security, it is clear that the function of the State in the sphere of finance is paramount, and that it must exercise that function when times are good as when times are bad.

But it is not only political thought that is being changed under the urgent whip of necessity. The whole nation is being tempered in the furnace. Touched to new issues the world that will emerge will be a world

that will be new and strange. There will be a chasm between us and our past unlike anything else in history. It will be as if generations of normal change have been swallowed up in the abyss. The old landmarks will have gone; the things that used to seem important will have become negligible; social relationships will have been transformed; ideas that were infinitely remote will have burgeoned, as it were, in a night—nothing will be quite as it used to be. Humanity will have opened not a new chapter, but a new age. It will be like him who looked out over

> "a universal blank of Nature's works,
> To him expunged and razed;"

but it will be a blank upon which we shall write the future in new terms and in a new language.

It would be a profoundly serious world—not serious in the sense that it will not recover its gaiety when the humiliation of this debauch of savagery has passed; but serious in the sense of those who have escaped from the wreck and have had a blinding revelation of the frailty of the structure upon which the fortunes of humanity are embarked. We shall hear no more of the Cubists and the Futurists, and all the little artificial cults that used to amuse us with their affectations of gravity. They have gone in the general conflagration. We shall be concerned not about the decorations of life, but about its foundations, and shall have no taste for the conflict of the Little-endians and the Big-endians. Indeed, they will have no taste for it themselves.

For the world has gone to a school that will change all its scheme of values. Think of it: twenty million men, drawn from every great European country and from every class of society—from the field and the factory, the office, the law-court, the university, the

Church—are engaged in the business of slaughtering each other as the instruments of some power that they do not control, of policies they do not understand, of causes too obscure and involved to be unravelled. Day by day they see the sodden or frost-bound earth strewn with the bodies of their dead comrades or their dead enemies. They have no personal animus against those enemies. They never met them until now, and in the brief moments of truce—as when Christmas came like the ghost of some dream world into their midst—they exchanged greetings and tokens and found each other just ordinary, companionable men, desiring no revenge and no blood, but just wishing to be back to their homes, their tasks, and their familiar ways.

Now these men, who are passing through this tremendous experience, are not ignorant boors. They can read and write; they can think and talk; they can ask questions and demand answers. The Russian, it is true, is illiterate (to the great joy of the mediæval soul of Mr. Stephen Graham), but even he will not escape the lessons of this fierce school. And for the rest, English and Germans, French, Austrians, and Hungarians — they have the tradition of generations of universal education, of industrial organisation, of familiarity with newspapers and books and politics. They have gone into this hell with the capacity to learn, understand, and question. They will not come out as they went in. They will return from the war seasoned men and thinking citizens—men who have seen the very skeleton of civilisation face to face, the gaunt bones, as it were, stripped of all the fair disguises of elaborate social distinction and diplomatic pretence. They will come back with a new light in the mind and a sense of authority that they never had before. And they will come back with the vote.

A new England is being brought to birth in the trenches of Flanders. The life of three million men, the flower of the nation, is being revolutionised. That young man who has gone from the plough will not return to the plough on the same conditions. He has made a discovery. Up to August last he seemed of rather less importance than the cattle in the fields, for they always were well fed and well stalled, while his whole life had been a struggle with grinding poverty. Suddenly he is exalted high above the cattle. He is a person of consequence. The statesman, the squire, the parson, the magistrate—all become his suitors. He is dressed for the first time in good clothes and good boots; he is well fed and well housed; he has pocket money; if he has a wife and children they are better off than they ever were before; if he dies, their future will be assured as it would never have been assured had he lived. It is all like a miracle. The discovery he has made is that when the real emergency comes his life is as valuable to the State as any life. And the thought that is dawning on him is this: If I am so necessary to the State in time of war, the State must be just to me in time of peace when I am doing its work no less worthily and no less vitally than on the battlefield.

This change of outlook affects the city clerk as much as the village labourer. A young man, writing home from the front to his parents, concludes thus: "No more office work for me." He spoke the thought that is shaping itself in many minds. There has been a breach with the past: new tastes have been acquired, new ideas of life and its realities have come to birth, new demands for self-expression will issue from thousands of lips. What are we doing to prepare to meet those demands—the demands of those, for example, who say, "No more office work for me," and who will insist either

here or elsewhere on the life of the open air and fruitful labour? The land question has been blanketed just when it is more urgent than ever—just when we are realising how true was the dictum of Froude that "that State is strongest which has the largest proportion of its people in direct contact with the soil."

There is another and still more fundamental theme that will emerge from the shipwreck. In a real sense it is the only thing that matters. We have been like children playing on the top of a volcano. We have busied ourselves with schemes of social reconstruction and have flattered ourselves that we were making this land a little better, a little happier, a little more just for the people who dwell in it. We knew no more of what was going on inside the volcano than if we were dwelling in Mars. But it was there that our fate was being fashioned by a small body of diplomatists and officials whose very names are unknown to the general public, who cannot be heard in public, or examined in public, or dismissed by the public. We have discovered that with all our constitutional rights, the greatest interest of this country is as much outside our control as the revolutions of the solar system.

Bagehot long ago commented on the anomaly that Parliament, which has control over laws, has no power in the making of war or peace or of treaties upon which the whole existence of the State may rest. Palmerston carried the doctrine so far as to say that it was not necessary even to communicate with Parliament on these things. It was not until twenty-four hours before the declaration of war that Parliament and the British public learned that for seven years this country had been discussing joint military and naval action with France. This secrecy is incident to a system of diplomatic relationship that has remained unchanged in spite of the revolu-

tion that has taken place in the real relationships of European society. Commerce and finance have become international, the credit system has made the world one, labour has moved towards the ideal of a world-wide sympathy, democracy has established itself as the vital principle of human government, social and intellectual intercourse, influenced by the achievements of science which have annihilated space, has become universal—everything in short has tended to the foundation of a world society motived by common interests and conducting its affairs with open and honourable directness. Only in one sphere has the tradition that we have outgrown remained. The peoples have moved towards a world fraternity, but they have not carried their governments with them, and secret diplomacy has in the end wrecked the fabric of human society. Can Europe again tolerate that peril? Can we ever again play about on the deck with the sails and the compasses while down in the hold there is a powder magazine and a lighted match, the very existence of which we are not permitted to know? Secret diplomacy belongs to the traditions of personal and autocratic government. It is fatal to democracy, and the ultimate decision of the war will be whether democracy, with its free and universal air, or autocracy, armed with the sword and burrowing with secret diplomacy, is to control the destinies of men.

V. THE LEGEND OF ARCHANGEL

It is said that when Lord Kitchener made his first demand for 500,000 men he believed that it would be futile, and that only conscription would give him the army that he needed. If that is so he gravely misapprehended the spirit of the country. It rose to the

height of the great argument with a passion all the more impressive for its freedom from any shallow emotion either of jingoism or hate. Those who recall the frenzies and vulgarities of the Boer War find it difficult to associate them with a people so sober and undemonstrative. The spirit with which the sudden peril has been met is the more remarkable because, unlike the Continental peoples, we are not habituated to the presence of the shadow of war. It is more than a century since the fear of invasion fell on us, and the coming of the terror might reasonably have tried our nerves. But the country has kept its head, its temper, and its courage. Its spirit is well illustrated by an incident which Mr. T. W. Russell related to me—an incident which deserves to companion that of the Roman mother. He was speaking to a woman whose three sons are on battleships in the North Sea, and he ventured to speak words of sympathy and comfort to her. "I wish I had ten sons," she answered, "and that they were all fighting for their country." Our sons will be all right while they have such mothers.

And not the least gratifying feature is the cheerfulness with which financial and business disasters, which in normal times would seem so overwhelming, are being borne. I know men who have been ruined by the crisis, whose business is with the Continent, and who have seen the fabric of their prosperity collapse into the dust; but you would not know it from their bearing. We find that we do not worry about the toothache when the house is on fire, that material losses count little when the deeper things of life are at stake. The nation is sounding the great waters, and learning very unusual lessons—lessons of mutual dependence, of self-sacrifice, of helpfulness and tolerance and goodwill. We are not so petty as we were yesterday. Perhaps some of us in the

early days ran to the banks to get heaps of gold, and some to the grocers to buy up sacks of flour, but if so we are rather ashamed of the fact and would not care for it to be known. But for the most part we are sensible and are concerned for once with something bigger than the safety of our own skins and the fulness of our own pockets.

But this essential calm does not mean that the country is insensible to the dangers that envelop it. It is profoundly anxious—how anxious is shown by the rumours that agitate it with fear or hope. The most wonderful of these rumours is the legend of Archangel. In the happy future, when the madness has passed and peace has returned to the earth, learned men will trace the legend to its source and reveal the seed of the prodigious growth that overspread the world.

The first indirect allusion to it that I have been able to trace was in the first week of the war when, amid the breathless secrecy that enveloped all the intentions of the War Office, the public mind was chiefly occupied with the question whether an Expeditionary Force was being sent to Belgium. Among those who were confident on this point was a member of a great shipping firm in the City. He knew that an Expeditionary Force was on its way; but it was not on its way to Belgium. To France, then? No, nor to France. Not to Belgium, not to France? Where, then, in the name of wonder? It was on its way to Russia. And he met the natural incredulity with his evidence—the Government had commandeered enormous shipping transport for dispatch to Archangel in the White Sea. If it was not to carry soldiers what was its purpose? And if soldiers, who but British soldiers?

That was probably the beginning. It contained two essentials of the legend—the transport of an army and

the mention of Archangel. Its weak point was, of course, the assumption that the Army to be transported to Archangel was the British Army. That was still incredible, and with the official announcement of the landing in France it was finally disposed of. But in the meantime a new and more intelligible aspect had been given to the story. It was a Russian Army coming from Archangel, not an English Army going there. Who supplied that final touch of verisimilitude to "a bald and otherwise unconvincing narrative" cannot be known. Probably it was no one in particular. The legend simply grew out of the mystery and intensity of those early days.

It grew in a favourable atmosphere. The capacity of the human mind to believe what it wants to believe is great at all times. That fact is the basis of all the myths of the ages. Looking out on the mystery of the wheeling universe, the magic of night and day, the pageant of the seasons, the miracle of life and death, men have conceived explanatory ideas and have found no difficulty in making the facts conform to them. We are all more or less subject to this dominion of the idea over the facts. When Falstaff described his battle with the men in buckram he did not deliberately lie. He had a romantic vision of himself as a hero fighting fearful odds, and he made the facts worthy of the vision. He believed them as George IV. is said to have believed that he won the Battle of Waterloo.

Now at the time the rumour of the Russian Army began to fill the air the public mind was in a condition that made it peculiarly accessible to an idea that promised help. The great war machine of the Kaiser was beginning to move, and all the world was awaiting the result with anxiety. In this country there was no fear of the ultimate issue, but there was much doubt as to

the early course of events, and the hint that immediate assistance was possible from another source fell on soil wonderfully prepared to receive it.

And when the first disposition to reject the idea as novel and fantastic had passed, it was seen to be neither novel nor fantastic. Given the command of the sea, the facilities of transport and the supply of men, there was nothing impracticable in the scheme. And as to its novelty—it was nearly two centuries old. For in the reputed will of Peter the Great, which was first published in 1749, and in which very elaborate instructions, couched in the spirit of Machiavelli and Bernhardi, were left for promoting the greatness of Russia, there was the suggestion that at a critical moment two expeditions should be prepared, one in the Sea of Azov, the other at Archangel, and launched against the western seaboard of Europe.

There has never been any rumour like it. We are accustomed to suppose that the only medium of news in the widespread sense is the newspaper. Travellers tell us, it is true, of the astonishing speed with which tidings will spread among uncivilised peoples—a speed which seems to outstrip any apparent means of communication and to have almost the fleetness and invisibility of the wind. It is a sort of sixth sense which sophisticated peoples have lost. But here was a rumour that swept the country from John o' Groats to Land's End—a rumour that, unlike any other rumour that we have known, owed nothing to the suggestion of print. For in this amazing time the journalist, whose business it is to tell everything he knows and sometimes even more than he knows, has discovered a golden gift of reticence. He does not need the help of the Press Bureau to be as secret as the grave when secrecy is vital. And so, while every office was throbbing with the mys-

tery there was no hint in the newspapers that they had ever heard of such a place as Archangel.

Meanwhile that blessed word was in every mouth. Like the poet, Archangel woke up one morning to find itself famous. It became a grievance against the war-map makers that they had cut off Europe just where it became really romantic and interesting. They had left out the White Sea and the North Cape and the Arctic Circle—everything in fact about which we were most ignorant and most concerned. For just as the war had blotted out the weather as the staple of conversation, so Archangel almost blotted out the war. Men must dispute about something in this imperfect world, and since all the ordinary political topics of controversy had vanished, they seized on this fascinating theme for conflict. They fought with the passion of the Big-endians and the Little-endians. As on all questions of faith, Society became divided into Believers and Unbelievers. There was the Pro-Russian party and the No-Russian party, the idealists and the realists, stern, unbending zealots who would yield no inch to the enemy, and around them were the hosts of the Mugwumps, swayed now to this side, now to that.

And all the while the very air was eloquent with evidence. It came from every quarter of the compass and in every form of personal witness. There was the Glasgow shipowner whose vessels had been mysteriously wafted away to the Northern seas, and the mayor of the northern seaport who has told a correspondent with significant mystery of the arrival of vast consignments of butter from Archangel, and as he said the word "butter" he looked to be bursting with secret knowledge. There were the Americans who could not return home because the great liners, the *Lusitania*, the *Mauretania*, and the rest, had been disembowelled and sent to

Archangel. An Oxford professor told you of the college don who had been summoned to the station to interpret for the Russians who were passing through, and your favourite aunt—a woman of unimpeachable veracity and common-sense — assured you she had seen the Cossacks watering their horses at Bedford Station. The Norwegian journalist in London could tell you of the Norwegian captain who had seen the Russians being disembarked at Aberdeen, and your neighbour on the magisterial bench had had a letter from an officer at Salisbury Plain in which he spoke of his work in connection with the thousands of Russians who had been sent thither to recruit after their long sea-voyage. The early bus-driver coming down Kilburn High Road had seen the hosts of Russia marching to Paddington, and the "knocker-up" of the policeman had the assurance of that functionary that he had been summoned thus early to the station because the Russians were passing through. There was the man who showed you the letter from his son who had seen 40,000 Russians embark at a southern seaport. Could he disbelieve his son? And could you disbelieve his son's father? From Southampton you learned that no one doubted because everyone knew, and letters from Rochdale and Stafford, Gloucester and Crewe, and a multitude of other places spoke of the passage of the Russians as if the fact were no more disputable than the Decalogue. Every event hinged on Archangel. What was the *Oceanic* doing in the strange waters where it was wrecked? What was the battle of Heligoland Bight except a diversion to cover the transport of the troops across the North Sea? And meanwhile the railways were closed for days and trains thundered through hour by hour, day and night, with drawn blinds and heavy burdens. Who could these hosts be and from whence could they come?

Private denials from Cabinet Ministers of course only made the thing more clear to the Believers. What could they do but deny—even if they knew? And was it not possible that from some of them the truth was hidden? For rumour has a faculty of making even opposition serve its purposes. And not all Ministers denied whole-heartedly, and there were members of their own family who doubted them even when they appeared whole-hearted.

It seemed at last that the Believers had carried the day and at this moment the whisper that deafened our ears first found its way into print, clothed in significant mystery. "There is also no doubt present in Lord Kitchener's calculations," said a London newspaper in its leader columns, "another formidable factor, which for military reasons we forbear to mention, but which, when its existence is disclosed, may, we venture to think, stagger Europe." It was cautious and discreet, but at last Rumour had a printed word to rest on. And when, a few days later, a message from Rome, stating that it was "officially" announced that Russian troops had arrived in England for France, was passed for publication by the Press Bureau and appeared in the evening newspapers, the Believers faced the Unbelievers in a spirit of unmitigated triumph.

But their pride was short-lived, and a week later the tide turned against them. A message from Belgium drew from the Press Bureau the following statement:

"There is no truth whatever in the rumours that Russian soldiers have landed in, or passed through, Great Britain on their way to France or Belgium.

"The statements that Russian troops are now on Belgian or French soil should be discredited."

If the intention was to get rid of the fable by one decisive "whiff of grapeshot," the last sentence was badly

phrased. To say that a thing " should be discredited " was to leave an option to the reader. It was not so short as " untrue " and certainly not nearly so final.

It was not surprising therefore to find that the Pro-Russian party were still unmoved and that they pointed to the equivocal denial almost as a new confirmation of their faith. The desire to believe became less urgent as the German Army fell back from the Marne, and as the weeks went by without a sign the phantom faded into thin air and was forgotten.

But the legend of the army that sailed from Archangel to England and passed through it (with drawn blinds) and vanished from our southern shores as mysteriously as it arrived on our northern coast will remain. It will provide for posterity a speculation as interesting as that as to the reasons for the failure of Grouchy to appear on the field of Waterloo. Was he also a mirage of the mind? The legend will take its place with that of the Flying Dutchman, and the phantom army will perhaps sail the seas for ever in the phantom ship. It has come as near being a fact as any fiction can. But the true interest of the legend is psychological rather than historical. It offers the most striking instance in our time of the growth of a myth, and it throws a curious light on the origin of the myths that have developed in the past out of the terrors, anxieties, and hopes of peoples fumbling darkly for an explanation of an inexplicable world. It could only have survived in circumstances in which the Press had become artificially silent and had ceased to bring Rumour to the challenge of definite proof. For the true twilight of the gods came with the printing press. Mythology and the newspaper cannot co-exist.

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH

AND THE SPIRIT OF SERBIA

I. THE BACK DOOR TO BERLIN

It is not only to the battlefield that we have to look for the true signs of the progress of the war. The straws that show how the wind blows come from the streets and the Chancelleries as well as from the trenches. The riots in Budapest were as significant an event as the victory of the Falkland Islands, and the retirement of Count Berchtold from the Foreign Secretaryship at Vienna throws as illuminating a searchlight on the whole field of the war as the flounderings of Hindenburg in the mud of Poland. Both the riots and the retirement convey the same lesson. "Keep your eye on Hungary" is a sound axiom of the war. There is the breach in the German fortress. The shortest way to Berlin is the longest. It is not by the front door of the Rhine, but by the back door of the Danube, for that door is very vulnerable. It might open at a knock. It might open without a knock.

The reasons are worth considering. There was probably never a war in which the issues were so various and so complicated—in which there were so many wheels within wheels. If young Peterkin went through Europe asking the question which old Kaspar found so difficult to answer—"What did they kill each other for?"—he would be bewildered by the variety of the explanations offered. "To defend the neutrality of Belgium and the sanctity of treaties" the Englishman would say. "To

preserve our independence" would be the Belgian answer. "To deliver the Serbian race from the Austrian yoke" says the Serbian. "To resist aggression and recover the lost provinces" the Frenchman would answer. "To defend our Fatherland from the Russian menace and extend the blessings of our Kultur" the German would say. "To save the Austrian Empire from dissolution" says the Austrian. "To protect our little brother, the Serbian Slav" says the Russian. "To recover Macedonia" says the Turk. "To avenge the wrong done to us twenty years ago" says the Japanese. And each answer would be one phase of the whole truth. But if young Peterkin carefully collated the answers he would, being an intelligent boy, inform his little sister Wilhelmine that, apart from the ambitions of Prussia, the root of all the killing was this: Was Russia or Germany, Slav or Teuton, to be master of Constantinople and the warden of the Balkans? And as a secondary cause he would put the preservation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

That Empire has had more hard things said about it than any save that of the Turk, and it has deserved them more. Gladstone declared truly that no one could put his finger anywhere and say, "Here Austria did well," and Bismarck likened the Austrian Empire to a ramshackle house built with bad bricks and only held together by the German cement. It was said long ago that if Austria did not exist it would have to be invented. The truth is that it has the appearance of an "invention"—a thing that has been pieced together out of disparate material rather than of a thing that has grown out of the soil. It is the negation of nationality. It is as artificial as Mrs. Gamp's curls which were so obviously false that they could not be said to be a deception. Falstaff said that Squire Shallow

was like a man made out of cheeseparings after supper. Austria-Hungary is hardly more real than that. It is like a moth-eaten structure that has long been uninhabitable but has forgotten to tumble down. It has been allowed to stand just as the Venetian Empire was allowed to stand until Napoleon came with his whiff of grapeshot and reality and crumbled it to dust. For a generation the prophets have prophesied disaster, and always the time of disaster was the same. When Francis Joseph dies, then . . .

But Francis Joseph has refused to die. He is

> "The last leaf upon the tree
> In the Spring"

and survives every storm that rages and every wind that blows. There has been no such reign in history as his, for the seventy-two years of Louis XIV. included some sixteen years of adolescence in which his sovereignty was nominal, while the sixty-seven years of Francis Joseph have been years of actual rule. And the reign has been no less remarkable for its events than for its duration. He came to the throne on the abdication of his uncle in 1848—in that year when the absolutism of Metternich had collapsed and the thrones of Europe seemed falling to ruin amid almost universal revolution. Within ten years he had lost Lombardy to the Italians, and seven years later he was rolled in the dust by Bismarck and found his country thrust out of the German confederation and the headship of the German family transferred to the Prussian.

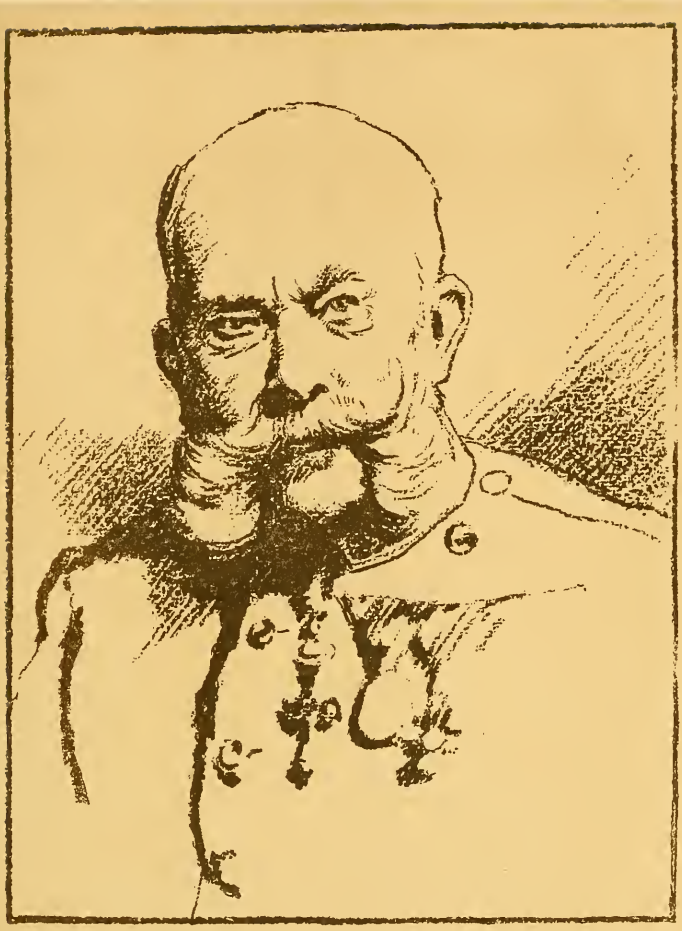
But these external disasters are only a part of the catastrophic story. Within the empire his reign has been red with blood. The best that can be said for him in regard to the infamy of his dealing with the Hungarian revolution in 1849 is that he was young—little more than a boy—and that he was probably only a tool in the

hands of Windischgrätz and the ferocious Haynau. But no courtly chronicling will ever wipe out the stain of the murder of Louis Batthyanyi and the Hungarian patriots.

From that episode sprang those curses which, whether real or legendary, have had a terrible fulfilment. It is said that the Countess Karolyi, whose son was among the victims, uttered this mediæval malediction upon the Emperor:

"May Heaven and Hell blast his happiness! May his family be exterminated! May he be smitten in the persons of those he loves! May his life be wrecked, and may his children be brought to ruin!"

And there is another curse attributed to a distinguished woman, who was dragged from her family and flogged by Haynau's savages in the market-place—a curse more precise and more daringly prophetic, for it declared that his crimes were to be avenged by thirteen tragedies, and that within two years of the last he was to die. And those who love the occult take pleasure in making a list of the calamities that have befallen the Emperor and in showing that the murder at Serajevo completed the tale, and that Francis Joseph's death is nearly due. Whatever credence is attached to the curses—and they are probably only inventions—there has rarely been a career in history more persistently dogged by tragedy than that of the Emperor—his niece burned to death, his daughter poisoned, his brother Maximilian shot in Mexico, his sister-in-law insane, his cousin Lūdwig of Bavaria insane, a murderer and a suicide, his only son Rudolph a suicide and a murderer, his wife, after attempting suicide by drowning, assassinated at Geneva, his sister-in-law burned to death in Paris, his brother exiled following a notorious scandal, his nephew and heir assassinated. Add to all this the



Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria-Hungary

innumerable matrimonial scandals and squabbles, the morganatic marriages, the elopements, the family conflicts, and we have a record of personal misery that would be difficult to match in any degree of life. And at the end of all, this stupendous calamity in the midst of which the reign that rose in the red dawn of revolution is setting in a sea of blood.

It would be unjust to Francis Joseph to take the punishment as the measure of his offence. On the contrary, though he has had notorious private failings, he has had considerable public virtues, and it is probable that nothing but his personality has saved his Empire from the disruption that is inherent in its artificial character. Think for a moment of the problem of government. Here, to begin with, is that impossible anomaly, a Dual Monarchy. And in that dual kingdom there is a confusion of races without parallel—Slavs (Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenes, Croats, Serbs, Slovenes) to the number of 21,000,000; Germans, 12,000,000; Magyars (Hungarians), 9,000,000; Latins (Italians and Rumanians), 4,000,000. With the confusion of races is the confusion of tongues. There are, exclusive of dialects, ten principal languages spoken in the Empire.

If Francis Joseph has failed to weld this heterogeneous mass into a political whole, the fact need cause no surprise—certainly no surprise to Englishmen who have had centuries of experience of the attempt to govern Ireland on centralised lines. His own tendency has, on the whole, been distinctly liberal. After that ruthless repression of the Hungarians, for which he can only be held technically responsible, he moved towards an enlightened toleration of the national ideal which was new in an empire predominantly Catholic and therefore non-national. The attitude of Austria, especially

in recent years, has certainly not been unfavourable to freedom.

But this movement towards cohesion on autonomous and national lines has been vitiated by the second of the great elements in the Dual Monarchy—Hungary. Although the Slavs are the most numerous element in the Dual State, the two most compact racial bodies are the Germans and the Hungarians, using that word in its racial sense as applying only to the Magyars. Now the Magyars are among the most able people in Europe. "There is more political genius in the little finger of a Magyar than in the whole body of a German," said a distinguished diplomatist to me long ago, and in saying this he expressed what is a commonplace of political society. It was the Magyars who first raised the flag of revolt against the old tyranny of Austria. They not only won their freedom and the independence of Hungary, but they won a lasting name as the champions of constitutional liberty in Europe.

Unfortunately, as not infrequently happens, their love of liberty was found in practice to be restricted to themselves. Liberty was too precious a thing to be wasted on Slavs, Latins, and non-Magyars generally, and the result has been the complete political suppression of the subject races and a condition of unrest that is largely the cause of the disruptive condition of the Dual Monarchy. And the influence of the Magyars has not been limited to Hungary. The political genius of the Magyar nobility has made them the dominating partner in the Federal government and even in Austrian affairs.

From all this it follows that the Magyars, with their high racial pretensions and feudal scorn of inferior peoples, are not likely to tolerate the idea of being hewers of wood and drawers of water for Berlin. The Magyars

neither love the Germans emotionally nor respect them intellectually. So far as this is a war for keeping the non-Magyar elements under control, it is a war of which they approve and which their policy has promoted. But so far as this is a war for the aggrandisement of Germany it is a war in which the Magyars have no enthusiasm, and the disposition of Berlin to regard Austria-Hungary merely as its obedient underling in the conduct of the war very early led to serious friction. There is nothing more certain than that Hungary will not sacrifice itself to save Prussia or even Austria, and that should it see its interests imperilled by association with Germany it would not hesitate to take an independent line.

And there is a particular as well as a general reason for its concern at the tendencies of the war. The possibility of the intervention of Rumania has been present throughout the struggle. At the beginning the German sympathies of King Carol were a restraining influence, and he made a strong pro-German deliverance in which he laid emphasis on the fact that the true interest of his country lay in the recovery of Bessarabia which was annexed by Russia under the Berlin Treaty. Since his death, however, the popular sympathies of the people with the Allies have been manifest, and the advent of Italy into the struggle has revived the movement in favour of war in Rumania, whose relations with Italy are racially and politically intimate. The movement is dictated by one main motive—the future of Transylvania. That portion of Hungary is overwhelmingly Rumanian in population, and it has long been fermenting with unrest under the repressive rule of the Magyars. To paint Rumania as a chivalrous deliverer would be an imaginative flight which it would be well to avoid. A country which has a higher proportion of illiterates than Russia cannot be suspected of any love of demo-

cracy. But there can be no doubt that the advent of a Rumanian army into Rumanian Hungary would raise the population *en masse*, and it was this shadow in the south that darkened the thought of the Magyars. They saw the dismemberment of their kingdom approaching. They saw themselves being sacrificed to keep Prussian territory free from the invader. Their pride and their interest alike were challenged, and they are not the people to sit idle under any challenge. They are the intellectual masters of the Empire and hold the old Emperor in the hollow of their hands, and it was doubtless to placate them as much as anything that Germany concentrated all its resources to fling back the Russians from the Carpathians into the heart of their own country. Berlin knows that it must look to its back door.

II. THE ROOT OF THE WAR

War is a great schoolmaster. It was said by John Bright that its only virtue was that it taught people geography. The partial truth of that saying is realised to-day in an unexampled manner. We all know the map of Europe as few of us ever knew it before. We could find our way almost blindfold over the Vosges Mountains and through the Ardennes to Nieuport. We are more familiar with the marshlands of East Prussia and the configuration of the Gallipoli Peninsula than we are with the Chiltern Hills, and we know the passes and summits of the Carpathians better than we know the mountains of Lakeland.

But geography is not the only subject on which we have had a miraculous illumination. We have learned much about the financial basis of society, the economic relations of peoples, the meaning of credit, the strategy of war, the functions of the State, and a hundred other

phases of our strange human society. We are in a school where we learn with a terrible rapidity many things to which we have been indifferent in the past. We were indifferent because, in our happy security, we thought they had no bearing upon our lives. We find that we were wrong—that the roots of our individual life have vast ramifications, that a blow struck in some remote corner of the globe may bring all our happiness to ruin. As I write in a tiny hamlet of a Midland county, I look across to a little cottage and see a woman bending at work in the garden. Last July she had three sons. To-day two of them lie in unknown graves in Flanders. The third is wounded and in hospital. I dare say she did not so much as hear of the Serajevo tragedy. Yet that tragedy lighted a train of events that has wrecked her life as it has wrecked the lives of millions all over the face of Europe. And if there is one lesson of the war more imperative than others, it is the lesson that the democracy can no longer live in the old careless ignorance of the events on which its existence ultimately depends.

How indifferent we were on that day when we heard the news of the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand and his wife! To most of us it was only the latest episode in the tragic story of the Habsburgs and a new sorrow for the sorrow-laden Francis Joseph. If we thought of its political meaning at all, we saw in it merely an incident in that interminable quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, a quarrel which had usually taken the serio-comic form of the "Pig War," Austria shutting out the Serbian pigs and leaving its neighbour without a market for its principal article of trade. Our sympathies were not engaged on either side. Austria made no appeal to any sentiment, and the reputation of Serbia had been too much stained with political assassination to command respect.

And yet there was no people in Europe more entitled to the sympathy and respect of the world than this nation of peasants who had fought so heroically for their national existence. Nor is there any people, not even the Poles, who furnish so convincing a witness that the principle of nationality can never be outraged without the penalty being exacted in full. If it were possible to destroy a nation, the Armenians would have long since perished under the centuries of torture that they have suffered, and the Serbs would have been absorbed long ago in the culture of their tyrants. It is more than five centuries since the Serbian people fell before the Turk on the field of Kossovo. They had touched greatness under their Tsar, Stephen Dushan, had been supreme in the Balkan Peninsula, and had developed laws and commerce and even the arts. But the triumph of the Turk left them shattered in fragments. Only that portion which after the field of Kossovo took refuge in the little mountain land of Montenegro preserved its freedom. Bosnia, in self-defence, adopted the faith of Islam. The fragment known as Serbia was ground under the heel of a ruthless tyranny, its nobility obliterated, its people enslaved. More than four centuries passed. The Montenegrins, entrenched in their mountains, still kept the flag of freedom flying, their life a perpetual war against the enveloping Turk. But the dawn was breaking. The strength had gone out of the Turkish Samson, and first among the Balkan peoples to throw off his yoke were the Serbians. They won their freedom in 1804 by their own unaided courage. The war of liberation in Greece a few years later touched the imagination of the world and brought to the cause of emancipation the enthusiasm of the West and the passion of the poets. And when, half a century later, the Bulgarians drove the enemy out of their land it was with the powerful aid of

Russia and the passionate support of the British democracy. But Serbia fought its battle without any applause, and sounded alone the doom of the Turk in Europe.

But when the menace of the Turk was rolled southwards new clouds began to gather on the Serbian horizon. They came from the north and took definite shape in 1875. In that year there was a rising amongst the Serbians of Bosnia against the rule of the Sick Man. He had now few possessions left in the Balkans. He had been thrust out of Serbia, Greece, and Rumania. He was going from Bulgaria, and the impulse of liberty had at last roused the Bosnians to action. Their kindred in Serbia and Montenegro answered cheerfully the familiar call to war against the historic foe, and their victory seemed assured and the freedom of Bosnia accomplished. But at this moment Austria-Hungary intervened and at the subsequent Berlin Congress robbed Serbia of the fruits of her sacrifice. Bosnia was left nominally under the Turk—actually in the possession of Austria. It was one of the many evil seeds sown at the Berlin Congress, and it is a humiliation for this country to remember that it was sown with the sanction and support of Disraeli. It was he more than any one else who was responsible for the two main blots on the Berlin Treaty—the handing back of Macedonia to the Turk and the maintenance of the Turk in Bosnia with the reversion to Austria. Bismarck, watching Disraeli's hand, secretly rejoiced. "The Jew will do the job for us," he had said to Austria, and now it was being done. Those of us who recall the theatrical "peace with honour" speech can to-day measure the calamity which that vain boast foreshadowed. The Berlin Treaty was Disraeli's single great achievement, and no greater wrong was ever done to the cause of peace and no greater outrage to honour.

From that wrong—with its denial of the claims of nationality, its repudiations of the small nations, its concessions to Austria, and its rehabilitation of the Turk—came our woes. Serbia, denied that reunion with her Bosnian kindred which her heroism had won, was left to struggle against the new foe, whose way to Salonica she barred and whose jealousy of her growth was exhibited in every form of irritation and intrigue. It was Austria who was always the evil genius of the peasant people. It was she who led the corrupt King Milan to engage in the first war with Bulgaria in 1885, and it was her malign influence which was largely responsible for the second Balkan war in 1912. She had shut out the Serbians from access to the sea through Albania, and the Serbians turned for their reward to Macedonia and so came in conflict with Bulgaria, which was precisely the object which Austria aimed at. In the meantime, in 1909, Austria had frankly annexed Bosnia. It was a flagrant breach of the Berlin Treaty and a calculated challenge to Russia to contest Austrian supremacy in the Balkans. Isvolsky accepted the challenge and encouraged Serbia and Montenegro to resist this final separation from their fellow Serbs. But at the critical moment the full meaning of the conspiracy was made apparent. The Kaiser's "shining armour" glittered in the field, and Russia, declining the new challenge, left Serbia and Montenegro to make their apologies and retire defeated. It was a great victory for Austria and a greater for Germany. Russia had been driven out of the field and the Serbian dreams seemed finally destroyed.

But this was only the beginning. It disclosed the larger aims which were now to be rapidly accomplished. Through Austria, Germany would advance over the body of Serbia to the Ægean and so establish her

"through connection" with Asia Minor and those Oriental glories that have been the dream of the Kaiser as they were the dream of Napoleon. The Turk was already "squared," and with Russia quiescent the path was clear and only the suitable occasion for taking it was awaited. But in 1912 there came a grave check to the plot. The Balkan Federation was born and Bulgar, Greek, and Serbian joined forces to drive the Turk from the Balkans. Their triumph was swift and startling; but not more swift and startling than the collapse. In that tragedy there were many villains; but the victor was Austria and, through Austria, Germany. The powerful Federation that had suddenly sprung up to bar the way of Germany to the Ægean was dissolved, and in its place there were only a group of angry and broken little states, ready at a word to fly again at each other's throats. The path was miraculously cleared once more, and the moment to strike approached. We know from the revelations of Signor Giolitti that the ultimatum to Serbia was contemplated in 1913, but for some reason it was delayed. Perhaps a plausible excuse was awaited.

It came with the Serajevo tragedy. The truth about that mysterious episode will one day be unravelled. It has been suggested that the assassins were tools of the Hungarian enemies of the Archduke, and the suggestion cannot be wholly dismissed, for the facts leave much to be explained. That the Archduke was extremely unpopular with the reactionaries of the Dual Monarchy was notorious. He was married to a Slav, was known to have Slav sympathies and to contemplate, when he came to the throne, a large extension of liberty to the Slav peoples who were so ruthlessly repressed by the Magyar autocracy. The circumstances of his visit to Serajevo were singularly suspicious, and the lack of proper pro-

tection was much remarked on. Nor can we leave out of account the small respect which was shown at his funeral and the refusal of the Emperor to allow his dead wife to share her husband's grave.

But whatever may be the finding of history on this obscure subject, certain facts are clear. With the death of the Archduke two things were accomplished which served the purpose of the conspirators at Vienna and Budapest in an almost miraculous fashion. The most formidable enemy of the reactionaries, the man whose Slav sympathies they most feared, was out of the way, and, equally important, an excuse of the most respectable kind had presented itself for finally clearing Serbia from Austria's path to the South. If the ultimatum of 1913 was delayed because of the lack of an adequate peg on which to hang it, there was no longer any reason for hesitation.

The secrecy with which the bolt was forged is familiar history. For more than three weeks there was no apparent movement. The ambassadors at Vienna were, except no doubt for the sense of mystery and disquiet which the atmosphere of conspiracy communicates, as ignorant of what was happening as the English people in the midst of their domestic quarrel. It was not until July 21 that Sir Edward Grey sent that simple inquiry which opens the White Paper. The contrast of that quiet, almost casual, little note with the swift and tremendous drama that unrolls itself in the following pages is unlike anything else to be found in books. It is as though with a careless remark about the weather we stumble upon the Day of Judgment. It was not until the ultimatum to Serbia appeared that the world generally realised that anything serious was afoot. Its terms left no room for escape, except by way of abject surrender, and the time-limit of forty-eight hours

deliberately excluded any possibility of peaceful negotiation. It was the " Hands up " of the highwayman.

No doubt it was hoped that the *coup* of 1909 would be repeated and that Russia would leave Serbia to its fate. There was ground for this view in the fact that M. Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, unlike M. Isvolsky, who held the office in 1909, was anxious for peace and had negotiated the Potsdam agreement that followed the Bosnian episode. But the situation was now fundamentally different. Then it was only the ambitions of Serbia which were at stake: now it was its existence, and not only that but the whole future of the Balkans. There is evidence that at the last moment, when they realised that the challenge would be taken up, Count Berchtold, Count Tizsa, and their fellow-conspirators were anxious to draw back. But if Vienna had been " bluffing," Berlin had not, and it was Berlin who was master. Its terms were a complete diplomatic victory as in 1909 or war, and the Hungarian plotters were caught in the net of their own fashioning. They had exploited the " shining armour " to win a bloodless victory and found themselves the tools of Germany's larger ambitions. And so in the end the wrongs of Serbia set Europe in flames, and the " peace with honour " of the Berlin Congress issued in universal war. It is the nemesis of nationalism.

THE GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS
AND THE TRAGEDY OF POLAND

I

It seems a long time since the newspapers talked so confidently about the "steam roller," and since Mr. Belloc used to correct their optimism by expressing doubts as to whether the invasion of Silesia would be really effectively begun before the end of October of last year. In the interval we have all grown wiser. We have learned much about the magnitude of the task, the meaning of strategic railways and of the military power of Germany. Silesia is still far off, and we are watching with tense feelings the progress of that colossal movement for the envelopment of the Russian armies upon which the enemy seem to have staked all the resources at their command. Four times, from autumn to early spring, the tidal wave thundered over Poland, from the extreme south to the extreme north, and seemed about to submerge the Polish capital, and four times it was dammed within sound, almost within sight of the city. We see now that the capture of Warsaw was the supreme winter task of Germany. After the failure at Ypres she concentrated all her power for a decisive blow in the East that would paralyse Russia and leave her own armies free to meet the mighty storm which she knew was gathering in the West and would break when the moment was ripe. The decisive blow failed. Russia, we see now, was not a steam roller; but a dam. The dam held throughout the winter and spring, and though the blows

are falling now with redoubled energy the decision for which Germany seeks is still denied.

If the expectations entertained at the beginning of the war in regard to Russia were extravagant, her military prestige is still high and her potentialities enormous. It is possible that the ultimate military judgment will declare that her plan of campaign was misconceived. There were two opposed views as to what her true function in the war should be. The view attributed to General Ruzsky was that of a military refusal from the beginning, the surrender of the Polish salient and a retreat into the heart of Russia, drawing the enemy in pursuit according to the model of 1812. The other view, of which the Grand Duke Nicholas was the advocate, favoured the retention of the Polish salient and an aggressive movement from the base of the Vistula. It was the latter view that prevailed, and throughout the early stages of the war it seemed to be overwhelmingly justified and to promise decisive results. Nor must we forget that, viewing the whole war as a single operation, the aggressive policy of Russia had a profound effect in disarranging the German plan of campaign. It was the advance into East Prussia in the first weeks of the war that weakened the force of the blow in the West, and in a large measure deprived the enemy of the initiative. And it was the threat to Silesia and the Hungarian plains in the south that later on drew off the main energies of the enemy from the West and left France and England the breathing space in which to gather up their resources for an overwhelming offensive. Whatever the ultimate judgment may be as to the wisdom of the policy of Russia, there will be no denial of the magnitude of her service and the very large measure of positive military success which she achieved. That success may be attributed to the lessons of the

disaster that befell her in Manchuria ten years ago, and largely to the personal influence of the Grand Duke Nicholas. There has probably never been a more infamous story of corruption than that associated with the Russo-Japanese War. It permeated the whole army and navy from the grand dukes downwards, and in the course of one of the many trials that followed the war, the head of the firm of Tille, the army contractors, admitted that in the course of twenty-five years they had paid £2,000,000 in bribes.

The revelations achieved something, but they did not cleanse the stables. They still left the army and navy the prey of the exploiter, and the Government incurably inefficient and unteachable. Only a few weeks before the war, when the military budget was introduced into the Duma, it was stated that there were 2000 generals in the Russian Army, against 350 in the French Army, and that of these the vast majority had received their rank not for military merit but through patronage or personal service. Of the younger generals only 25 per cent. had passed through the regimental mill. And out of 300 colonels of most recent promotion, only one had gone through a military academy. The official attitude towards corruption may be illustrated by the case of General Reinbot, who before the Russo-Japanese War was the Prefect of Moscow, practically the Viceroy of the Tsar. He was convicted of corruption in connection with the army and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. This was reduced to a year in a fortress, followed soon afterwards by a free pardon. When the invasion of East Prussia took place, General Reinbot was appointed governor.

It was not without reason, therefore, that the Grand Duke, addressing his commissariat staff at the beginning of the war, is reported to have concluded his instruc-

tions in these terms: "Gentlemen, no stealing." And probably if anybody could induce an army contractor to be honest, it would be the Grand Duke Nicholas. For he is not only the most influential man about the Court, but he is the most popular figure in Russia. His mere height and the dignity of his carriage would alone command respect, and his manner is at once modest and authoritative. His temperament is that of the mystic, and he is reputed to be the source of the strange influence which the Phillippes, Meshkertskys, and Rasputins have exercised over the mind of the Tsar and the politics of Russia.

But if he is obscurantist in temperament, he is a very practical man in affairs. He has taken his career as a soldier seriously ever since as a youth of twenty-one he fought in the Russo-Turkish War, and if he is not a great strategist himself he has the wisdom to rely upon the men who are wise. Nothing is more significant in the generalship of the Russian army to-day than the entire disappearance of the figures who were prominent in the Russo-Japanese War. We have to thank the Boer War for at least one thing. It showed us our general of capacity. It gave us Sir John French. If the Russo-Japanese War did not teach Russia on whom to rely, it at least taught her whom to avoid. The only man who played a conspicuous part in that campaign, and who reappeared in high command in the present war, was General Rennenkampf. He came from Manchuria with almost the only reputation that survived that disaster. Like Sir John French's, it was the reputation of a brilliant cavalry leader. But unlike Sir John French's it has not survived the severer test. His failure to arrive when Mackensen's army was nearly enveloped near Lodz was as fatal as Grouchy's non-arrival on the field of Waterloo, and it led to his supersession.

The service that the Grand Duke Nicholas has done to Russia to-day is that he has cleared the path for the men of brains, and has not disdained to go to Germany for his lessons. General Yanushkevitch, the Chief of the General Staff, is the Moltke of the campaign, and he received his military education in Germany, where the press is never weary of reproaching him with "ingratitude." Very German, too, in his learned and professional equipment is General Ruzsky, the strategist, who, with General Ivanoff, the Chief of the Organising Staff, completes the intellectual trinity of the Russian Army.

The action of the Tsar in abolishing the sale of vodka has also been attributed to the influence of the Grand Duke. In a sense this no doubt is true. No incident of the war has produced a more profound impression on the mind of the world; but the revolution has come about as a military necessity rather than as a social reform. From the latter point of view it had been demanded for years. The Zemstvos and village communities had implored the Government to save the nation from the ravages of drink. The very victims themselves joined in the appeal, and Count Witte at last took a step towards the revolution when he made the distribution of vodka a Government monopoly, destroying the whole vested interest of the trade at a blow. But the next step seemed impossible. From the monopoly the Government drew a revenue of nearly a hundred millions sterling a year. The solvency of the State seemed to rest on an industry which was destroying the very soul of the nation. It was a hard alternative that confronted the Government, but the war made the course clear. The Grand Duke remembered the mobilisation during the Balkan crisis. It had always been said that when war came the ravages of vodka

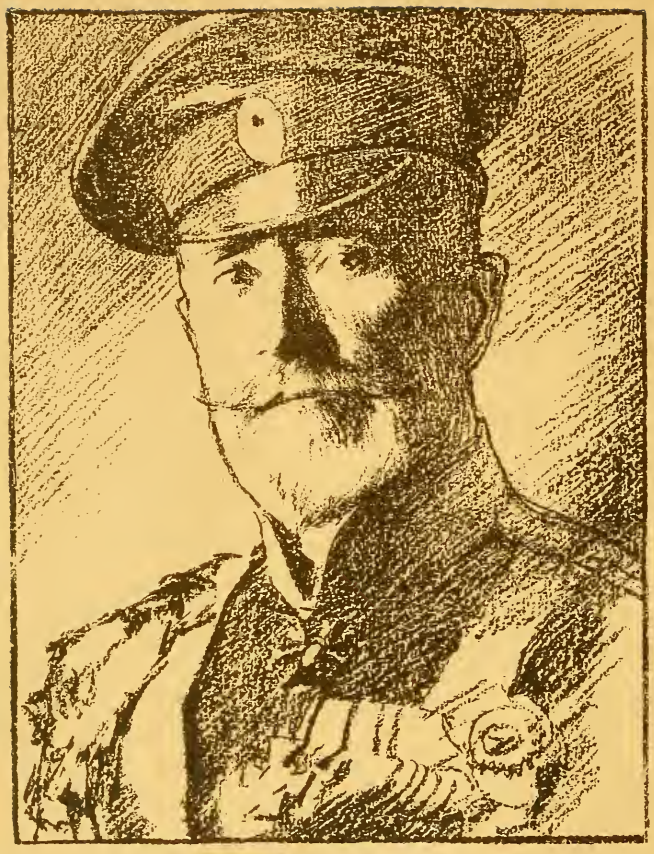
would be worth a week's start to Germany. During the mobilisation in 1912 the saying was found to be well within the truth. Russia collapsed into intoxication. The men came, as it were, out of a debauch, reeling, stupefied, their pockets bulging with vodka bottles. At the depôts, as the men staggered in with their bulging pockets, the vodka bottles were taken from them, and there arose "a mountain of broken glass in a sea of whiskey."

That experience was not to be repeated in 1914. Like a bolt from the blue came the decree that delivered the nation from the tyranny of drink. What years of agitation had failed to accomplish, the war effected in a day. Revenue or no revenue, the nation must be saved. Vodka must go. The Grand Duke spoke, and the miracle was done. It has led to another miracle; the industrial productivity of the people has increased from 30 to 50 per cent. The war apart, Russia has found that its sacrifices have enriched it beyond all calculation.

But when the strain and excitement of the war is over, something else will be necessary. If you do not have vodka you must have liberty, education, hope, ambition. For vodka is not so much a cause as a consequence, and it was a wise man who said that drink was the shortest cut out of Ancoats. Vodka has been abolished as a military necessity; but its place will have to be taken by the new and more wholesome interests that are denied to a people 75 per cent. of whom are illiterate.

And it is in this connection that one's confidence in the Grand Duke Nicholas is modified. There will be no military weakening from him. He stands aloof from the dangerous German influences that surround the Court of Petrograd, but he stands aloof also from the popular impulse of the nation. Russia cannot win through this

mighty conflict without all her energies being engaged, and those energies cannot be engaged while a corrupt oligarchy, largely under German influence, is at war with every instinct of liberty and popular expression within the nation. To have a victorious Russia there must be a free Russia, a Russia whose governance expresses the spirit of the nation and not the interests of a caste, and it is because, with all his fine qualities, he stands for a reactionary Russia that the Grand Duke leaves one's mind filled with doubts as to his adequacy for the task. It is true that it was he who issued the famous promise of liberty to Poland; but that promise, like the vodka decree, was a military necessity and events have not strengthened the hopes which it awakened. The statements of Prince Dolgourokoff made in the most influential paper in Moscow as to the treatment of the Jews indicate no change in the heart of governing Russia, and the new scheme that has been announced for the suppression of the last rags of freedom left to Finland consorts ill with the idea of a war that is being waged for the protection of small nationalities. Nor is the experience of Galicia promising. We have commented justly on the attitude of the Pope towards Cardinal Mercier's great indictment of Germany; but it is fair to the Pope to remember that the Cardinal Archbishop of Lemberg has been deported to Russia, and that Bishop Jurek, the head of the Theological College of the Uniate Church, has been sent to Tomsk, in Siberia. For tactless imbecility indeed it would be hard to match the story of the invasion of Galicia. The people might easily have been won over by a reasonable policy of conciliation, but they were put instantly under the heel of the most stupid and ignorant influences. The monkish mystics of the Orthodox Church descended like vultures on their prey. Religious liberty was denied,



The Grand Duke Nicholas

the national feeling insulted, the schools invaded, and a machine of tyrannical incompetence set to work to reduce liberty to a shadow. In a few swift weeks the "liberation" of Galicia left the people yearning for the milder yoke of Austria. And this was only typical of the disastrous policy that governed Russia in the early months of the war. Bourtseff, who exposed the *agent provocateur* Azeff, and who returned to Russia under the general, if vague, promise that a new day had dawned, was in prison; and as an example of the attitude towards liberty, I may mention that every publication printed in the Ukranian tongue in Russia was suppressed on the ground that the Government, on the authority of the official philologists of Russia, did not recognise the existence of such a language. I fancy Wales would not rush very enthusiastically to the recruiting office if the Government issued a ukase announcing that its native language was not recognised, and the War Office promptly suppressed every paper printed in its characters.

For these deplorable follies, it is impossible to hold the Grand Duke wholly innocent. His power in the early stages of the war was almost illimitable and his failure to exercise it with wisdom and tolerance, at all events in Galicia, is a matter of history. In his sympathies he is Pan-Slavist, a fact in some measure due to his marriage with a daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro, another of whose daughters is married to the Grand Duke's brother Peter. To that extent, it may be said that, unlike M. Sazonoff, he was one of those who regarded a conflict with Pan-Germanism as inevitable. It was a great blow to the Pan-Slavist cause when M. Isvolsky was superseded by M. Sazonoff, whose disposition was notoriously for peace, and whose advent to office in 1909 was followed by the Potsdam agreement and the withdrawal of two army corps from

the German frontier. But the web woven in the Balkans largely by M. Hartwig, the Russian Minister at Belgrade, changed the current despite him. Indeed, it will be found when all the skein of intrigue that preceded the war is unravelled how much the catastrophe was due to obscure diplomatists, like the Pan-Slav Hartwig, and the equally mischievous Pan-German von Tschirschky, who as Ambassador at Vienna played so large and sinister a part in the final diplomatic stages of the tragedy. But the Pan-Slavism of the Grand Duke is no more an instinct of nationalism than the Pan-Germanism of the Kaiser. It is the expression not of Liberalism but of Imperialism.

II

1815-1915

It is by the fulfilment of the pledge to Poland that history will judge the Grand Duke and the Tsar in whose name he spoke. The proclamation he issued on August 14 is one of the most memorable documents on record, not merely for the magnitude of its theme, but for the splendour of its rhetoric.

"Poles!

"The hour has struck in which the sacred dream of your fathers and forefathers may find fulfilment.

"A century and a half ago, the living flesh of Poland was torn asunder, but her soul did not die. She lived in hope that there would come an hour for the resurrection of the Polish nation and for sisterly reconciliation with Russia.

"The Russian Army now brings you the joyful tidings

of this reconciliation. May the boundaries be annulled which cut the Polish nation to pieces! May that nation re-unite into one body under the sceptre of the Russian Emperor. Under this sceptre Poland shall be re-born, free in faith, in language, in self-government.

"One thing only Russia expects of you: equal consideration for the rights of those nationalities to which history has linked you.

"With open heart, with hand fraternally outstretched, Russia steps forward to meet you. She believes that the Sword has not rusted which, at Grünwald, struck down the enemy. From the shores of the Pacific to the North Seas, the Russian armies are on the march. The dawn of a new life is breaking for you.

"May there shine, resplendent above that dawn, the sign of the Cross, symbol of the Passion and Resurrection of Nations!

"(Signed) Commander-in-Chief General Adjutant,

"NICHOLAS."

"1 (14) *August* 1914."

There is no more striking episode of the war than this swift and triumphant emergence of the Polish question from the general ruin. It had been truly said that you may destroy a State, but that you cannot destroy a nation. Like the camomile, to use Falstaff's image, the more it is trodden on the better it grows. It may die of decay, but it only thrives on oppression. Of this truth the supreme witness is the story of the Polish nation which is the most sustained tragedy in the history of modern Europe. Long before Russia or Prussia or Austria had found themselves, Poland was the great power of Eastern Europe, extending at one period from the shores of the Baltic to the shores of the Black Sea. Its disintegration was due mainly to its

failure as the centuries went on to meet the new conditions that enveloped it. On every side the great autocracies—the Hohenzollerns in Prussia, the Romanoffs in Russia, the Habsburgs in Austria—were consolidating and centralising their powers, while Poland was the prey of aristocratic privileges. The ideal of the State was sacrificed to class liberties, and the fact that the Kingship was elective contributed to the spirit of disunity. There was no focus for the nation. Encompassed on all sides by aggressive powers centralised in personal and hereditary monarchies, the doom of Poland was long foreseen. Frederick the Great was the chief architect of the first partition; Catherine II. of Russia was the author of the second. Maria Theresa shared in the plunder, but unwillingly, for she had a soul and, moreover, she had no wish to see Russia advancing to her own borders. There came a ray of hope when Napoleon was master of Europe and its dynasties, and the Poles flocked to his standard; but the hope was swallowed up in the ambitions of the great adventurer. With his eclipse there was one more fleeting promise of resurrection, and it is of good omen that it came from Russia, from that Alexander I. whose character and rule are one of the few bright spots in the tragic story of the Romanoffs. Why did that promise fail? If we understand that we shall have a sure guide to the task of the future.

At this time a hundred years ago there was sitting at Vienna a Congress of the great kings and their representatives. Europe, after nearly twenty years of war and disruption, was at peace. Napoleon had fallen, and his dream of a world empire had shrunk to the dimensions of the tiny island of Elba. And now, the Ogre, as they believed, securely caged, the kings and the diplomatists were assembled to rebuild the structure

of Europe and, if possible, to ingerminate perpetual peace. Yes, even at the risk of inflaming the martial soul of *The Spectator*, it must be said that it is indubitably true that this monstrous idea prevailed. It was even put forward by Lord Castlereagh, who represented England at the Congress—so low, Mr. Strachey, had the warlike spirit of this great country fallen.

Now we all know that the Congress of Vienna did not usher in the reign of perpetual peace. I do not here refer to the interlude of the Hundred Days that ended with Waterloo. That was only an aftermath of Napoleonism, and did not affect the decrees of Vienna. There was, it is true, a long period of calm after Waterloo, but it was the calm of exhaustion—not the calm of a just settlement. The true offspring of the Congress of Vienna was not the peace that prevailed for thirty years, but the wars that, beginning with the great upheaval of 1848, have culminated in the universal catastrophe of to-day.

Why did the Congress of Vienna, which did really desire to establish the new Europe on a foundation of enduring peace, sow instead the seeds of new harvests of death? The question is a vital one at this time. At no distant period—the harvest of Krupp and Armstrong and Schneider having been reaped—there will be another Congress, not at Vienna, but at Stockholm, or The Hague, or some other neutral spot. And once again we shall see the architects surveying the ruins, designing the new structure and aiming, quite honestly, to make its proportions so just, its means so perfectly suited to its ends that it will never collapse again, but stand "four square to all the winds that blow." We shall not doubt their good intentions. But good intentions are not enough. The good intentions of Vienna paved our Hell. Much more important than the good inten-

tions of the architects will be the ideas from which they work, the interests they represent, the sort of cement they use to hold the new fabric together.

And it is here that the lesson of Vienna is fruitful. "When I want to know what to do in given circumstances," said a wit to me once, "I try to think what my father would have done—and then I do the opposite." The Congress of 1916 (if, happily, it be 1916) will do well to observe a similar attitude of distrust in regard to the example of its true author and begetter, the Congress of 1815. For if Europe repeats now what it did a century ago, then the fruit of its labours will not be lasting peace but more wars. And that for a very simple reason. The only interest that was not represented at the Congress of Vienna was the interest of the peoples concerned. The soil of Europe from Torres Vedras to Moscow was drenched with the blood and strewn with the bones of millions of the common people of all lands who had been sacrificed in the great game of the Dynasts; but when it came to the settlement no one gave a thought to the rights or the interests of the nationalities. The Kings and their Ministers swooped down upon their quarry and fought like vultures over a corpse. They wanted peace; but they wanted peace with plunder.

And in the struggle for plunder the chief motive was the aggrandisement of their dynasties. The map of Europe was redrafted with as little regard for the wishes of the people as if they were cattle in the fields. The dismemberment of Italy was confirmed by the surrender of Lombardy and Venetia to Austria. Sweden, robbed of Finland by Russia, was kept quiet by the cession of Norway. But it was the treatment of Poland which was the supreme blot on the work of the Congress, and in that treatment Lord Castlereagh was the chief actor.

His motive was fear of Russia. The Tsar, Alexander, who conducted his own case at the Congress, wanted to reunite the fragments of Poland under the Crown of Russia and with the concession of autonomy. To compensate Prussia for the loss of her share of Poland he offered to give her Saxony, which was not his to give. But there is no doubt that his intentions in regard to Poland were honest and liberal, for his subsequent action in conceding autonomy to that portion of Poland that came under Russian control is on record. But Castlereagh, dreading the advance of Russia so far into the heart of Germany, fought against Polish reunion under Russian sovereignty, and, with the assistance of Metternich and Talleyrand, defeated it, though only after the conflict had become so severe as to threaten a new war between the allies. Poland was left mutilated under the heel of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and the crime of Frederick the Great and Catherine remains to-day.

From that Congress, in short, nothing but wrong came forth, and Castlereagh's scheme for securing permanent peace by an agreement to make collective war on any Power which attempted to upset the settlement came to nothing, not only because at the critical moment Napoleon reappeared on the scene, but because in such an atmosphere there was no possibility of an honourable and disinterested compact. It is not very profitable to discuss what might have happened had nations instead of dynasties been the governing factor in the settlement. But it is useful to recall the fate that has overtaken these ingenious jugglings with the map of Europe. The century that has passed has made ashes of most of the solemn covenants of Vienna. Italy has thrown off the yoke of Austria, Norway is independent, Hanover is no longer a possession of Great

Britain, Belgium is free (or until yesterday was free), and the kingships of Naples and Sardinia have vanished. What remains of Vienna is all bad. Finland is still enslaved, and Poland dismembered and crushed under the triple heel of the Dynasts. Had Castlereagh, instead of resisting Alexander's scheme for the reunion of Poland, directed all his energies to making that scheme a reality, to giving Poland not only unity, but liberty, he would have done a splendid service to the great principle of nationalism. And had he succeeded, Poland would have served as a check alike upon the ambitions of Russia and of Prussia, and would have contributed to a true equilibrium of Europe instead of that artificial equilibrium which is the unattainable dream of ambitious kings and intriguing diplomatists.

In a word, the lesson of Vienna is that the way of lasting pace is by the path of democracy and not of despotism, and if the Congress of 1916 is to avoid the calamitous consequences of that of 1815 it must approach the problems it will have to solve from the point of view of national interests rather than from that of dynastic ambition or diplomatic ingenuity. Kant founded his vision of Perpetual Peace on the rock of Republicanism, and if he were living to-day he would not alter his foundation stone. So long as the world allows the Kaisers and the Cæsars and the Napoleons to play with its destinies there will be war. I would have no King who wore a uniform or pranced at the head of soldiers. The head of a State should be its chief citizen, and he should come on to the parade ground as the symbol of the civic power. Make him a soldier and he will soon subordinate the council chamber to the parade ground. Give him a uniform, gold epaulettes, and a brass helmet, and he will soon begin to think of government in the terms of Krupp and Armstrong. His diplomacy will

be the diplomacy not of internal peace but of external conquest. It will look abroad rather than at home. He will think of his people not as citizens whom he can serve, but as soldiers whom he can command, and every art of peace, every victory of science, will be diverted to the purposes of war.

In the black coat of the President we have the assertion that peace and not war is the goal of human society, and that the highest interest of the State is the well-being of its people. The day that the French President or the United States President should put on a uniform to review the army would be a day of sackcloth and ashes for all who wish well to those countries and humanity. Nothing but the necessity of wearing civilian clothes (and a limited term of office) would keep so perfect an example of the Napoleon breed as Mr. Theodore Roosevelt from developing dreams of world-empire. Let France, after this war, look after its plain-clothes President. He will be in imminent peril.

This is a digression; but it is a digression that is pertinent, for the main object here is to urge that when the Congress comes it shall be the democracies and not the despots who shall inspire its deliberations and govern its decisions. The settlement of 1815 failed because it put back the clock to the eighteenth century and treated Europe as a chequer-board for a game played by gentlemen with gold crowns and brass helmets. If the Congress that we await is not to leave behind a heritage of dragons' teeth also, it will have to start from the idea of the sovereignty of the people—from the idea that nationality is the only cement that will hold Europe together and give it lasting peace.

Every other settlement will be artificial and doomed to failure. It was the mutilation of France which kept the wound of 1870 open. Bismarck knew that it would

keep it open and, in his letter to his wife after the Versailles settlement, admitted that Germany had "gained more than I think wise, in my personal political calculation." To-day she is beginning to understand what fatal folly it is to outrage a nation, and leave it nursing the passion of revenge. The Archbishop of Canterbury has wisely urged that, in the coming settlement, there should be nothing that could keep alive that passion in the heart of Europe. Let justice be done and full atonement made, so far as atonement is possible; but let there be no violation of the principle of nationalism to leave a legacy of revenge that will poison the future.

The fate of Europe to-day is being settled on the battlefield; but this is only the first phase of the struggle. To-morrow its fate will be even more decisively influenced in the council chamber. The battle that will be fought there will be between the old ideals and the new, between the conception of Europe as the chessboard of dynasts and aristocracies and the playground of soldiers, and the conception of Europe as the freehold of the common people and the hive of its peaceful activities. All the conflicting interests of human society are preparing for that struggle and for what will come after it. The Royalists and Clericalists of France are full of new and extravagant hopes, and the Prussian junkers everywhere—the people who hate militarism in all countries except their own—are looking for new victories over the democracy. They are talking not about the evils of secret diplomacy, or of despotism, or of militarism; not about the limitation of armaments, or the means of establishing a peaceful European society organised to make war impossible. They are talking about the virtues of conscription and the need of more ships; about that phantom, the balance of power, and (unconscious that they are echoing von Moltke, Bern-

hardi, and the rest) about the high spiritual influence of war. "While human nature endures there will be war," says *The Morning Post* with unconcealed satisfaction. "There are worse things than war," says *The Spectator*, its eye on democracy.

It is time that the people were awake too, or they will find that the story of 1815 will be repeated to-day, and that, at the end of all this frightful carnage, we shall have started on a new century of armed peace and bloodshed—that, in fact, this world is still "the mad house of the universe."

Few men will have more influence in moulding the future than the Grand Duke Nicholas, for the successful conclusion of the war will leave him one of the two or three most powerful figures in Europe. He has capacity, ambition, the passion of the mystic, and the skill of the practised man of affairs. He is, as I have said, the most popular man in Russia. He is, too, the power behind the throne. The Tsar is a man of sincere but shifting emotions, easily subject either for good or evil to the influences around him. The Grand Duke will be one of the chief of those influences. It will be largely in his power to mould a new Russia. It will be largely in his power, too, to stereotype the old Russia. He has shown, in the vodka decree and in the manifesto to Poland, that he can make great resolves in the interests of war. Let us hope that he will show himself equally capable of great resolves in the cause of freedom.

It is not unreasonable to hope that it may be so. There is in the strain of the Romanoffs a curious dualism which is absent from the Hohenzollerns. Through all the history of the latter house we look in vain for one great human impulse. It is an uninterrupted story of harsh and personal rule. But through the despotism and tyranny of the Tsars there has always run a strain

of mysticism and humanity which has been the spring of fine emotions and large, imaginative deeds. It was so in the case of Alexander I., who was by far the most humane and enlightened influence at the Vienna Congress. It is so in the case of the present Tsar. He is weak and subject to influences, and his career has been a strange record of noble impulses and despotic acts. It is difficult to reconcile the author of the Hague Tribunal with the author of Red Sunday and the decorator of the Black Hundreds. But, while he is profoundly subject to external suggestion, the Tsar is at the bottom a visionary with a sincere though inconstant tendency towards the light. As the founder of the Hague Tribunal the world will look to him, primarily, to make that structure a real defence against a recurrence of the shame and horror that have fallen upon civilisation. In it we may hope will be centralised all the international forces, economic, industrial, religious, that make for co-operation. Its powers should include the imposition of an economic boycott on any country whose actions are a menace to the world's peace, and they should move towards the establishment of an international police for the preservation of the collective interests from the assaults of any brigand power. The Tsar, more than any single individual, will have it in his power to give the world the lead out of the shambles of the past. He can, if he will, be the great Liberator, not of a nation but of humanity itself.

GENERAL BOTHA

AND THE SPIRIT OF THE EMPIRE

Among the figures thrown into relief by the war none has more significance than that of General Botha. More than any one else perhaps he embodies the conflict of ideas of which the war is the expression. He represents in its most dramatic aspect that doctrine of Empire based on self-government which is the capital contribution that Liberal England has made to the governance of the world. There has been no braver or more momentous act of policy in our time than the grant of self-government to the conquered Boer States. That act was the supreme purpose upon which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had set his heart in coming to power, and I have been told that it was only the force of his appeal in the Cabinet—an appeal that by its simple greatness touched more than one of those present to tears—that made that daring experiment in freedom possible. How bitterly it was opposed is still fresh in our minds. Lord Milner's vaticinations in the House of Lords were doubtless influenced by the sense of defeat, but they were quite sincere. He believed in the Prussian gospel of a governing race imposing its civilisation and forms of government, its " Kultur " in short, upon subject peoples by force, and he saw in this concession of freedom to the conquered states the doom of Empire. In less than ten years he was to see the most startling disproof of his theories of government that history has afforded. Had self-government been denied to South

Africa, had the old wound of the Boer War been left open and angry, had Botha and Smuts been driven into the ranks of the insurgent Boers, South Africa would have gone, when the war broke out, almost without a shot being fired. We could not have raised a hand to save it. But it withstood the shock unflinchingly. It withstood it because it was free.

Probably the events of the war have furnished no greater disappointment to the Kaiser than this. It is part of the general disillusion he has suffered in regard to the power of this country to play an effective part in the war. In his calculations of the material factors involved in the great adventure the Kaiser and his advisers were generally right. In regard to the spiritual factors they were uniformly wrong. They believed that the British Empire was a fiction that would tumble to the dust at the first breath of real challenge. It was an imposing structure, the creation of the centuries of good fortune that had attended this lucky but incompetent people; but it had no reality, because it did not exist by the sanction of the sword. Ireland at that moment was on the brink of civil war, and the government had not the courage to forbid the rebel rising any more than they had the courage to suppress the rebellious women who were setting fire to private houses and railway stations and assaulting the members of the government themselves. The army, such as it was, was being openly exploited in the interests of the rebels in Ireland, and parliamentary government was on the point of collapse. I know, from one who saw the Kaiser in those days, with what interest he was following the drama in Ireland. " He could talk," said my informant, " of nothing but Sir Edward Carson, whom he had seen in the autumn. ' Ah,' he said, ' that is a man. He knows what he wants and he means to have it.' Again

and again his talk reverted to this theme. It seemed to fill his whole mind." There is reason to believe that Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador in London, warned his government not to rely on the Irish trouble as a factor in their favour. But it is one of the mischiefs of personal government that it develops secret channels of information, and the official view was set aside in favour of what were believed to be the direct and indisputable sources of knowledge.

Not less hopeful from the Kaiser's point of view was the prospect in India. For years there had been widespread unrest in the great Dependency. The disastrous action of Lord Curzon in partitioning Bengal had sown the seeds of serious trouble. That trouble, it is true, had been partially allayed by the Morley reforms, the visit of the king, the mitigation of the Bengal outrage, and the mild and judicious administration of Lord Hardinge. But there was much smouldering disquiet, and it was no longer confined to the Hindus, but had spread to the Mohammedan population, whose extra-territorial allegiance to the Sultan as the head of the faithful had been disturbed by the Balkan war and the apparent conflict between Christianity and Islam. For years the Kaiser had been cultivating the Turk, and assuming the rôle of the friend of the Mohammedan world, and there is no doubt that when the war came he expected that this country would be faced with an Indian crisis that would cripple its power of effective intervention in the European war. But, as in Ireland, the domestic quarrels vanished at the coming of the greater peril, and the essential justice of British rule and the definite movement under Lord Morley and Lord Hardinge towards a more liberal conception of that rule bore remarkable fruit. It was not merely that men like the late Mr. Gokhale, the greatest statesman that India has produced in our time,

were eagerly for the Allies. That, of course, went without saying. In a conversation I had with Mr. Gokhale on the night before he sailed for India the last time his talk was dominated by his concern for the interests of Great Britain in the struggle. He was returning to his country a dying man, and I think he knew it, but he was returning with the desire to spend his last efforts in using his unrivalled influence over India in the cause of this country. But even the extremists flung all their energy in the same scale, and one of the most fervid appeals to India came from Mr. Tilak, the great popular agitator, who in the past had suffered long terms of imprisonment in connection with his propaganda.

So far as the self-governing parts of the Empire were concerned, the German view was that they were negligible with the important exception of South Africa. There was the weakest link in that very weak Imperial chain that hung about the neck of Britannia. And, superficially, there was much to justify this view. It was only twelve years since the Treaty of Vereeniging had ended the Boer war; only eight or nine since the grant of self-government to the old Boer states. Memories lingered long among the dour, primitive farmers of the veldt, many of whom, the famous De Wet among them, had never accepted the Peace of Vereeniging and still nursed their stubborn hostility in secret, looking for the day when they would be able to hoist the "vierkleur" flag once more. The elements of discontent were various. They had that strange visionary Van Rensburg at one end of the scale and ex-President Steyn at the other. They constituted a potential field of rebellion of extraordinary promise, and it was not unreasonable that the Kaiser looked to South Africa as an important ally in his adventure. But, again, he left out of his calculations the influence of freedom in the affairs of men. And it

General Botha

is not improbable also that he miscalculated both the strength and the motives of Louis Botha. It was quite easy to do so, especially for a man of the Kaiser's histrionic temperament. For no man who has achieved greatness in these days has achieved it with a more modest carriage, and few men have known better how to keep their own counsel or to pursue their ends with a more bland obscurity—a mixture of simplicity and subtlety extremely difficult to penetrate. He has that imperturbable serenity that baffles inquiry, and leaves you on a casual acquaintance wondering whether he is merely dull or deep. Sir Wilfrid Laurier baffles you with the same serene manner, but in this case you are never in doubt about the spaciousness of the mental operations behind the external mask. But if it is not easy to come at the real Botha in a chance meeting, it is not difficult to discover the character and motives of the man from a study of his career.

It is only sixteen years since Louis Botha slung his rifle and his bandolier across his shoulder and mounting his horse set out from his lonely farm, a simple burgher, to join the commando under his old friend Lucas Meyer. He must have looked that day, as he always looks, a splendid specimen of humanity, tall, massive, broad chested, sitting his horse like one who had been born to the saddle, hair and beard cropped close, eyes blue and candid, his manner slow and untroubled as of one who knew nothing of cities, but had lived his life among his flocks and herds on the solitary veldt. And yet to the eye of Mayfair, so bright in those days with thoughts of the coming triumph and the splendour of the mines that were to be won, he would have seemed a ridiculous figure. David going out with his sling and pebble to fight the Philistine could hardly have presented a more forlorn and hopeless spectacle than this stalwart farmer

as he set out with his fellow burghers to meet in battle all the resources of the British Empire.

Nevertheless, if—remembering the Napoleonic maxim—you had looked in his knapsack that day you would have found the promise of most wonderful things, things much more wonderful than the marshal's baton which was there. You would have found the brevet of a general of the British Army. You would have found the premiership of the Transvaal, and behind that the premiership of a United South Africa stretching from the Cape to the confines of Rhodesia. And, strangest of all the ironies of history, you would have found the title to Groote Schuur. Down in the south Cecil Rhodes was dreaming and scheming to found a great South African union. The Jameson Raid had gone off at "half-cock." "He has upset my apple-cart," said Rhodes. But now at last had come the war for which he had been hoping and working. After the war, the union. And here in his residence at Groote Schuur should be the home of the first premier of the new British confederation. He did not know that he had built an official home for that stalwart burgher who was setting out from his farm to give him battle. Time has had few stranger revenges.

Surprise at the contents of the knapsack would have been reasonable. For there is no suggestion of romance or high destiny about Louis Botha. He belongs to the category of those who are made great, not by ambition or even by dazzling genius, but by circumstance and character. Without a despotic king, Cromwell would have gone to his grave remembered only as a rather gloomy and untidy gentleman who brewed beer and drained the fens. Without a foolish king, Washington would have had only a local and transient reputation as a quiet man of perfect morals and exceptional

veracity. Without the discovery of the gold of the Rand, Louis Botha would still be on his Vryheid farm, with which thirty years ago he was rewarded by Dinizulu, for whom he and other Boers had fought against the rival Zulu chief, receiving in return territory which became the "New Republic," and which was shortly afterwards incorporated in the Transvaal.

But it was circumstance which furnished the stage, it was General Botha's own unaided qualities which won him distinction. It would be easy, on a superficial view, to underrate those qualities, and to regard his career as a sequence of surprising accidents. He is at no pains to correct this view, for he has no vanity, no postures, and is indifferent to applause. He does not wear his heart on his sleeve, is sparing of words and slow to burst into confidences. His manner is placid and equable. He seems to draw on infinite reserves of patience and contentment, and has the unhurried air of one who has always got his subject well in hand and has ample time for his purposes. It is said by his opponents that he is slow, that it is doubtful whether he himself understands the details of his own Bills, and that he seldom seems to appreciate the point at issue in a debate. It is true that he has not the parliamentary genius of General Smuts, who impresses one deeply by the acuteness of his apprehension and the agility and subtlety of his mind. But he has a breadth and simplicity of outlook that win confidence much more swiftly and finally than the supple dialectics of his colleague.

Moreover, behind that rather bucolic exterior is an extraordinarily wary mind. If he does not say much it is not that he has not much to say, but that he has a genius for keeping his own counsel. In that he is not unlike Washington. "There," said Quincy Adams, pointing to a bust of Washington, "there was a fool who

made a great reputation by keeping his mouth shut." Louis Botha is as little of a fool as Washington; but he can keep his mouth shut and his eyes open. This natural gift of restraint has been strengthened by a life spent in dangers and difficulties of many kinds—in the field against the Zulus and the British, in the pursuit of big game, in conflict with Kruger and his Dopper school, and later in the midst of the baffling interests of a country which offers more perplexing problems for the statesman than any country in the world, the problem of the Indian, of the native, of the Boer farmer and the British mine-owner, and of the relations of white labour and black. Mercifully he has been spared a Chinese problem as well. For that he remembers Campbell-Bannerman with gratitude.

But with all his caution and kindliness there is daring in reserve and with it ruthlessness, as we saw in his handling of the great labour dispute. His measures then were without precedent in a British community for their severity. They won for him a significant approval among the reactionary influences in this country which at the time were turning more and more to counsels of force in dealing with the problems of politics and labour. If labour was getting out of hand, then what so full of encouragement as an object-lesson in martial law as a means of calming unrest? "Hands up!" and a machine-gun were such a simple expedient for dealing with insurgent labour. They had been the dream of many an anxious mind in England. And now General Botha had turned that dream into a reality. He was at last a really popular figure with English Society. It was a distinction that had no meaning for him. His action in the famous strike, whether right or wrong, was not due to hostility to labour, or to love of government by force. It was due to his habit of meeting an

emergency with any weapon that the occasion seems to him to demand. His natural disposition is towards compromise and a reasonable settlement, for he has no fanatical tendencies in any direction and might easily pass, on a shallow view, for a trimmer. But though he will surrender the secondary things he never surrenders the essential things, and though his temperament is entirely pacific it has a formidable fighting quality in reserve. So long as a patient unravelling of the knot offers hope there is none more patient, but when the sword offers the only solution he takes it unwillingly, but very deliberately and even ruthlessly. He does not hesitate to shoot. "If we are at war, let us be at war," he said when Joubert in the early stages of the Boer war was showing what seemed to him too much delicacy. It was so that Cromwell protested against the nerveless spirit of Manchester. It is generally admitted by students of the war that had Botha been in command from the beginning the course of events would have been even more disastrous than they were. After the flight from Dundee, Botha, who had risen at a stride from a burgher to assistant-general to Meyer, was eager to cut Yule's retreat off, and if his advice had been followed Yule's column could never have traversed that terrible fifty miles of wild, broken country, and Ladysmith would have fallen. But Joubert was old and humane. He would not risk his men. And later, he granted Sir George White a neutral camp for his sick, relieved the British commander of a grave anxiety, and materially added to the resisting power of the garrison. Much in the same way, Lord Roberts later on greatly prolonged the resisting powers of the Boers by refusing to sacrifice more men at Paardeburg in order to complete the destruction of the enemy.

But even more important was the failure of Botha

to impose his strategy on Joubert in regard to Ladysmith. He would have left only a trivial force to hold White in the town and would have descended with the main army upon Maritzburg and Durban with the result that we should have had to commence the reconquest of South Africa from the sea coast. Probably we owe the possession of South Africa to-day to the fact that Joubert was old. How different a colour events took when Joubert died and Louis Botha succeeded him we have the memories of Colenso and Spion Kop to remind us. There was no mercy now. At Colenso General Botha saw, not unmoved by admiration for the bravery of the foe, Long's gunners galloping to death. But his admiration and pity did not check his purpose. He brought forward a body of his best burghers who shot down the gunners as they stood to their guns. It has been observed that in similar circumstances Joubert would probably have said, "Let them alone, poor fellows. Enough have been killed for one day." The later developments of the war showed other qualities besides daring and ruthlessness. He became a tactician and a strategist of large sweep and rapid execution and like Lee and all great generals discovered a genius for estimating an opponent's intentions by realising his character.

To this quality of cautious daring, he unites extreme moderation of thought. In his temper he resembles Lee much more than Jackson, for he has no fanaticism. And like Lee his heart was not in the war. He did his utmost to avoid it. Long before the outbreak he was at issue with the Kruger régime and his opposition to the old President in regard to the Dynamite concession brought against him a charge of using his position as a member of the Volksraad to help the mine-owners. He took an action for libel against

his assailants, but withdrew it on an apology being offered.

His subsequent career in the war blotted out all suspicions of his loyalty to the Boer cause, and no one questioned that loyalty when at Vereeniging, after all was over and he addressed the men who had followed him in battle so long, he advised the acceptance of terms. But it is true, nevertheless, that he is too cosmopolitan in his spirit and outlook to be a whole-hearted nationalist. Of Huguenot as well as Dutch extraction, born in a British colony (Natal), and married to a brilliant Irishwoman, it is not remarkable that he should not conform to the old Dopper view or be in sympathy with General Hertzog.

The truth is that in their dreams of the future Cecil Rhodes and Louis Botha were not so far asunder as they seemed. Both saw a united South Africa as the goal; but while Rhodes thought of the British as the dominant race, Botha aimed at the emergence of an Afrikander people embodying Briton and Boer in a union, indissoluble because the factors were no longer distinguishable or separable. This purpose may be seen through all his policy after the war. It was this purpose, for example, that dictated his opposition to the Transvaal farmers' demand for protection against the neighbouring colonies. It was a bold line to take against his old soldiers; but he knew that if protection were once adopted it would be a fatal bar to union. How true his instinct was was evident when, afterwards, he carried his resolution for closer union with only one dissentient.

The consolidation of that great achievement needed time, and time was not allowed. Less than six years had passed since Louis Botha became premier of a united South Africa when the supreme test was applied to the work of Campbell-Bannerman. The menace

which General Botha had to face came from two quarters. The first and the most reputable was the farmer of the back-veldt, the burly Dopper of the Kruger school, dour, unyielding after the fashion of the Ulster type, who had never accepted the settlement and wanted only to lapse back into the ancient rut of his fathers. With this element, of which that strange seer, Van Rensburg, was the prophet and General Hertzog the practical hope, General Botha knew he could make no terms. The dream he had realised of a united South Africa on the basis of a free Afrikander community, in which the interests of Briton and Boer were finally merged, was as hateful to these stern old Puritans as militarism would have been. From them rebellion was inevitable. But behind that element was another more treacherous and more formidable. It is not clear how far General Botha suspected the existence of the Beyers conspiracy, but if he had any suspicion at all it could not have been very strong, or General Beyers would not have been allowed to remain commandant-general. But the facts since disclosed show that Beyers and Maritz had been conspiring with the Germans for a considerable time, being especially active during July, and that Maritz had drawn up an agreement with the governor of German South-West Africa. It was with a view, no doubt, to the storm that he knew was coming that Beyers gave Maritz military control on the Union border where he would be conveniently situated for operating with the Germans.

Whether he suspected the full measure of the peril or not, General Botha, with his habitual circumspection, was fully prepared for emergencies. He knew that his agreement with Lord Kitchener to raise an expeditionary force for the invasion of German South-West Africa would be used as a weapon against him by the irreconcil-

ables—that it would be said, as Hertzog did say, that he caused the rebellion by that act. But he knew also that some rising was certain and that, apart from the invasion of the German territory, the gathering of the expeditionary force would give him the means for swift and decisive action. His decision saved South Africa. A weaker man would, in his place, have waited and temporised, and it is clear now that any delay would have been fatal. For the conspiracy gathered impetus with extraordinary rapidity, being largely favoured by the successes of Germany in the first weeks of the war. The effect of those successes on the opinion of the world was not realised here. Indeed the magnitude of those successes was not known here. The great defeat of the French in Lorraine, for example, was not heard of until much later, but it was known in South Africa and had an important bearing on the prospects of the conspirators. At this time the real danger was still undiscovered. So far as there was a rebel movement at all, it existed apparently only among the back-veldt Boers. Beyers was busy consolidating his position in readiness to strike. In all this episode this man's part was the basest. De Wet was a misguided man but he was not a traitor, for he had never accepted the Peace of Vereeniging. Hertzog played an obscure and unpleasant rôle and, although his name was freely used by the conspirators, never repudiated the rebels. But there is no evidence that he actively or even covertly helped them. Even Maritz, traitor as he was, seems to have been a traitor because he had a real attachment to the Germans. But the treachery of Beyers was without a redeeming feature. His motive seems to have been one of sheer ambition, for it is evident that he dreamed of becoming, with the help of Germany, the President of a new republic. His duplicity was as skilful as it was shameful. He remained

Commandant-General as late as September 15, and so acquainted himself with all the dispositions of General Botha, and was able to forward his plans by placing men like Maritz and Kemp in control of the army in the critical areas. The measure of his ignominy is shown by the fact that on the very day (Friday, September 11) on which he sent his telegram of good wishes to Sir Duncan Wallace, the commander of the force which was embarking for Lüderitz Bay, he interviewed Maritz and Kemp and arranged for starting the rebellion on the following Tuesday.

The selection of that day had a peculiar significance. It was the 15th of September. Now in one of his visions the seer Van Rensburg had seen the number 15 on a dark cloud, from which there issued blood, and following this portent he saw General Delarey returning home without his hat, followed immediately by a carriage covered with flowers. This vision was interpreted as forecasting honour to Delarey and a successful rebellion on the 15th of a certain month. It is not probable that Beyers, deep in his German plot, was very much concerned about visions, but he was concerned to link up the honest, if stupid, Boer superstition with his cunning purpose, and the 15th was chosen as " the day " for that reason. It had originally been the 15th of August, and a great meeting was actually held that day to inaugurate the rebellion, but owing to a peaceful address which General Delarey delivered at the request of General Botha, the gathering broke up without result. The intervening month, with its German victories, had strengthened the plot, and Beyers counted confidently on raising the rebel flag on the 15th September.

On that day a strange event happened which, whatever the truth about it, served Beyers' aims. General Delarey was riding with Beyers in a motor car at night

when he was shot dead by a policeman who was alleged to have mistaken him for an armed burglar who had been carrying on his depredations in the district. The event startled the world and its effect on the Boer farmers was electrical. It seemed to suggest new interpretations of the vision of Van Rensburg, and it inflamed the smouldering feeling against the Botha policy. It has never, I think, been alleged that Delarey had any connection with the plot, and no one who knew that chivalrous man would believe it if it were. Among all the Boer leaders he was the most attractive figure—simple, gentle, and singularly winning in address. De Wet was stubborn as a mule and solid as a rock. You could make nothing of him. But Delarey, who had Huguenot blood in him, had a sweetness of manner and a simple candour that won your confidence at once. But though he was not in the plot he was a name to conjure with among the Boers, and his tragic death, coupled with the story of the vision, which had had a wide currency, made the outlook very grave and the hopes of the rebels high.

A false move by General Botha at this crisis would have been fatal. It would have been easy to be rash, easier to be too timid. But with characteristic wariness he tried conciliation on the one hand while strengthening his military preparations on the other. His mediator with the rebels was ex-President Steyn, whose attitude throughout was wholly admirable; but Beyers only used the interval to fan the flame of rebellion, and when the stern, unbending De Wet openly joined him there was no hope of a reconciliation. The campaign was a swift and overwhelming triumph for General Botha. De Wet had either lost the elusiveness that kept Lord Kitchener so long on the run, or he was watched by one who knew his ingenuities too well. In any case he was

speedily rounded up. Beyers was killed in crossing a river, Maritz fled into German territory with his followers, and in three months the rising was suppressed, and General Botha was free to enter upon the task of driving the Germans out of South-West Africa—a task which he has accomplished with extraordinary completeness and rapidity.

It would be too much to suggest that all the discontents in the Transvaal have disappeared. That cannot happen while the Boer generation that is rooted in the past survives. But there can be no revival of the dream of the Kaiser—cherished no doubt since the day that he sent his famous telegram to President Kruger—of a conflagration that should end the British tenure in South Africa and strengthen his arm in his struggle for world dominion. The grant of freedom to South Africa had made it a bulwark of the Empire in the hour of need, and General Botha the champion of the British idea of liberty against the Prussian idea of racial subjection. The seed of liberty has never borne more splendid fruit.

KING VICTOR EMMANUEL

AND THE SPIRIT OF ITALY

In the collection which will one day be made of the great speeches on the war, that of Signor Salandra in explanation of Italy's intervention will, for its mingled passion and dignity, take a first place. We do not want a better illustration of the spiritual oppositions behind the struggle than the contrast that that speech offers to the clumsy brutality of the speech of the German Chancellor to which it was a reply. The anger of Germany at the intervention of Italy is natural, though a wiser man than Bethmann-Hollweg would not have allowed his anger to express itself in the silly allegation that Italy had been bought by English gold. If he believes that, it is another evidence of that myopia which afflicts the German mind and makes it so blundering and unintelligible. But it is clear he does not believe it, for in the same speech he gibes at the King of Italy on the ground that he has surrendered to popular passion. There he is nearer the truth, for ultimately the action of Italy has been the action of the nation, motived neither by English gold nor diplomatic intrigue, but by a genuine passion for liberty.

But the anger is excusable, for when the time comes to estimate the decisive influences in the struggle, it is not improbable that the first place will be given to the action of Italy. Had that country thrown in its lot with the Central Powers on the outbreak of war, the task of the Allies would have been so enormously increased that, in the light of our experience of the magni-

tude of that task, we may even doubt whether it would not have turned the scale against us. The effect on the position of France, on the situation in the Mediterranean, on the course of events in the Balkans, on the action of Rumania, on the possibility of such an adventure as the expedition to the Dardanelles, on the economic position of the Central Powers, needs no emphasis. Italy was in a very real sense the key of the position. The Kaiser knew that, and in the great gamble of July it was the miscalculation in regard to Italy that was among his most flagrant mistakes.

There was no excuse for that miscalculation. In all the revelations of the war there has been none more illuminating than the statement of Signor Giolitti, last December, to the effect that in August 1913 the Austrian Foreign Minister told the Italian Ambassador that Austria contemplated sending an ultimatum to Serbia, and asked whether in that case Italy would support her ally. The reply was in the negative, and from that moment Austria and Germany ceased to treat Italy as an active friend. It is significant that there has never been any repudiation of the Giolitti disclosure, either in Germany or Austria. Why he made it is not very clear, for that extremely slim statesman has been, throughout the prolonged struggle in Italy, the mainstay of Germany and of the policy of neutrality; and his departure from Rome was the first absolute proof to the world that Prince Bülow's mission had failed, and that war was imminent.

But with that negative of August 1913 it should have been clear to the Kaiser that, in the absence of a swift decision, Italy must be reckoned among his enemies. It was not merely that the Triple Alliance had been an empty formality since the Bismarck-Crispi days, that the wedge that Bismarck had so astutely driven in

between Italy and France had ceased to operate, and that, on the other hand, the historic antagonism between Austria and Italy was only intensified by time. More important than all this was the instinct for liberty of the Italian people. Their resurrection had been the greatest achievement of the spirit of freedom in the nineteenth century, and the sentiment of the nation, born of that achievement, was entirely with the democracies of Western Europe. For such a people neutrality could be no permanent resting place. As the struggle progressed, political interest reinforced the human sympathy, and it became clear that the place of Italy among the nations was not tenable on the terms of non-intervention. She must strike a blow for one side or the other or lose her claim to be heard in the councils of Europe.

It was fortunate that Italy in the hour of its momentous decision was not in conflict with the predilections of its King. Not the least of the assets of Germany in the war has been the extent to which the sympathies of peoples with the cause of the Allies have been held in check by the sympathies of Kings with the cause of the Kaiser. That is very largely the explanation of events in the Balkans. But Italy is happy in the possession of a King whose temper is as liberal as that of his people. He is in many ways the most remarkable monarch on a European throne. His eminence is not physical, for in that respect he is the least of men. He is very little over five feet in height, and even under the new minimum standard would hardly succeed in passing muster for the Kitchener Army. His poverty of inches is the more noticeable because his wife, Queen Helen, is one of the tall, athletic daughters of the mountain Prince of Montenegro. It is the jest of King Nicholas that his daughters are the chief export trade of Montenegro, and

it is a trade of which the gallant old patriarch-King is legitimately proud. Three of his sons-in-law are now in command of armies of the Allies, for the wife of the Grand Duke Nicholas is, like the Queen of Serbia, a daughter of King Nicholas.

But though Victor Emmanuel is inconspicuous in stature he is in character a man of quite unusual significance. I do not here refer to his intellectual gifts, though they are sufficiently remarkable. They have none of the surface brilliancy of those of the Kaiser, for he is the least demonstrative of men. They have much more the quality of the recluse and the student, due no doubt to that weakly childhood through which he was nurtured by Queen Margherita with such unwearying devotion. This tendency to erudition is evidenced in many directions, but primarily in the science of numismatics. This is sometimes spoken of as his hobby; but it is much more than that, for he not only has the amateur's interest in the subject generally, but the expert's interest in one phase of it. He is the first living authority on the coins of Italy, and his great monograph on the subject, *Corpus Nummorum Italicorum*, the first volume of which was published some years ago, is among the most important literature of the science, while his collection is said to contain some 60,000 pieces. To the uninitiated, numismatics may seem a blameless but anæmic recreation. It is in fact an extraordinarily illuminating science that opens the gateway to the romance of history and to the understanding of the social and economic development of human society. It is this access to larger things that gives it its appeal to King Victor, whose sympathies and interests are singularly wide in range.

But it is his character even more than his intellectual equipment that makes the King of Italy the most

unusual figure among European royalties. He is the antithesis of the aggressive personalism of the Kaiser. One feels that here is a man who has realised the modern conception of Kingship as it has rarely been realised before. There have of course been popular Kings in plenty, Kings who cultivated democracy and relied for their power upon its sanction and goodwill. But it may be doubted if there has ever before been a King whose convictions were so much engaged by the conception of the citizen King. King Albert is not less democratic in sympathy and taste, but in his case the motive is feeling more than intellectual conviction.

This conception of his office, as well as the strength of his character, was revealed in a dramatic manner immediately on his accession to the throne by a decision of rare courage that shocked the conservative elements of society, but had a profound and enduring influence for good on the nation. He had, up to that time, been practically unknown. His modest habit of life, his student taste and his apparent indifference to affairs had made him a negligible figure. It was his practice, if any one sought to sound him on politics, to make a remark on the weather. The consequence was that he came to the throne an unknown quantity. And he came to it in circumstances as trying as any young monarch ever had to face. His father, King Humbert, had fallen by the hand of an Anarchist, and the horror of the crime had evoked a cry for stern repressive measures. But the young King was adamant. He would not confound democracy with the crazy act of an assassin, and resolutely resisted the cry for reprisals. This attitude of mind, while it shocked Society, had a remarkable effect on the nation. Within a fortnight, said a witness of the events of those days, the Italians " had passed from the depths of sorrow and shame to a

height of confidence unknown before to the present generation." The sudden revelation of the character of the new King had touched the deepest chord in the mind of a responsive people.

Nor was it a passing effect. The plain, unceremonial life of the King and Queen—delighted with each other and devoted to their children—did not make them popular with " Society," but on the nation the character of the King produced a deepening sense of trust. His refusal to attack the Socialists because of the crime of a mad Anarchist was the keynote of all that followed. Within three years of his accession he sought, to the scandal of the Conservatives, to introduce the Socialist leader, Signor Turati, into the Cabinet, and in 1911 he repeated the experiment in the case of the Socialist Signor Bissolati, who represents the Quirinal division of Rome and has the King for his chief elector. The incident offers a significant contrast to the case of Herr Liebknecht, who represents Potsdam in the Reichstag, and has his chief constituent for his open enemy. Signor Bissolati did not enter the Cabinet, offering as his excuse his objection to wearing the regulation frock coat; but the effect of the King's attitude has been to modify profoundly the asperities of politics and to make the Socialists realise that social reform is not merely consistent with constitutional monarchy, but may even be more smoothly attained under its influence.

In all this the motives of Victor Emmanuel were not that shallow and insincere thing called " tact." No one uses that banal word in connection with him. It would be impossible, for he has never played the courtier to his people. Indeed, he is no courtier to anybody, and though he and his wife have always been conspicuous by their personal and humane service in connection with those terrible disasters that have befallen the people

at Messina, in Calabria, and elsewhere, they have never used that service as a mere convention of royalty. Indeed, the King's plain intelligence is revolted by any such antiquated affectation. When he was leaving after his work at Messina an obsequious official explained how the presence of the King had alleviated the suffering of the people. "Don't talk nonsense," was the King's curt comment.

No, the democratic attitude is not a pose, but the expression of a spiritual unity with the people, born of the history of his house. There are few finer stories in the records of kings than the loyalty of his grandfather, Victor Emmanuel, the King of Sardinia, to the cause of the Italian people. It was the House of Savoy which was the one beacon light in the dark days of tyranny, when the Italian people were struggling towards freedom against the usurpations of Austria, the claims of the Vatican, and the cruelties of King Bomba, "the negation of God." Through all that tragic time the kingdom of Sardinia remained true to the cause of popular liberty, and as that cause, under Mazzini and Garibaldi, slowly emerged to victory in Italy the whole nation gathered round Victor Emmanuel II. as the symbol of national unity and democratic freedom. The settlement of 1866 left the great work of Italian regeneration incomplete, for Austria still held the Trentino and the gates of Italy, but unity was achieved and time would fulfil the dreams of complete solidarity. The artful diplomacy of Bismarck delayed the fulfilment. There is no feat of that astonishing man more remarkable than his success in detaching Italy from its natural ally, France, and making it the creature of its historic enemy, Austria. But diplomacy, though it may pervert policy, cannot pervert the soul of a people. The Crispis and Giolittis might make their alliances with Germany, but when

the hour struck the nation would flow into its natural channel.

And when the hour came and Signor Salandra resigned, the people had not to deal with a recalcitrant King. Victor Emmanuel's sympathies had not been in doubt, but with the sense of propriety that never fails him he had made no attempt to force the situation. The obstacles in the way of intervention had been formidable. For once—but of course for widely opposite motives—the Socialist Left and the Vatican were in accord. The position of the Pope throughout the war had been extraordinarily complicated and his action necessarily obscure. Catholicism like Socialism is international, but the desolation of a faithful Catholic country like Belgium should in itself have brought to the cause of the Allies the overwhelming moral support of the Church of Rome. That simple issue, however, was shadowed by other considerations. In the great struggle for Italian liberty the cause of the Vatican had been allied with the cause of Austria, and the establishment of the political unity of Italy had sounded the death-knell of the temporal power of the Papacy. There had followed two generations of hostility between the Vatican and the Quirinal—the people united around the King, the Church regarding the King as the despoiler of its prerogatives and looking to Austria as its ancient ally and present defender. Hence, when the war came, the influence of the Vatican was directed to preventing Italy being involved in a conflict with Austria, and even Cardinal Mercier's great indictment of Germany's crimes in Belgium left the voice of Rome silent.

Now, in his attitude to Rome, the King has been at once firm and correct. He neither yields to the Vatican where his true functions are concerned, nor does he indulge in idle pin-pricks. His attitude may be illus-

trated by two incidents. The first occurred when he came to the throne, and was largely the cause of the instant impression he made on the nation. Where was the murdered Humbert to lie? The widowed Queen Margherita wished him to be buried at the Superga at Turin, where all the House of Savoy lie, with the exception of Victor Emmanuel II., the founder of the Italian nation, who is buried at the Pantheon at Rome. Her wish was governed by her desire, as a faithful Catholic, to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of the Vatican. But her son would not yield to what he regarded as an intolerable claim. It is related that he entered his mother's boudoir at Monza, pale and tired, and exclaimed, "That is arranged—my father will have a fitting burial in the Pantheon." "Victor," said his mother, "I see you want to break my heart. You offend my religion as well as my affections." "I am sorry, mother," was the reply. "But the religion which is offended at a martyr being buried in his own capital and lying beside his own father needs radical changes." And to the joy of the Italian people, King Humbert was laid at rest in Rome. But, having asserted the political rights of the Italian nation in Rome, he was content, and when a son was born to him he did not add to the grievances of the Vatican by calling him the Prince of Rome. He called him the Prince of Piedmont.

In the long struggle for the decision of Italy, the hopes of Prince Bülow were founded on the Vatican much more than on the Quirinal. It was known that the King would not intrigue against his people, but there was no doubt where his sympathies lay. Putting aside all considerations of political interest, his democratic view of monarchy dissociated him fundamentally from the Imperialism of Prussia and of Austria. Even as

Crown Prince his influence had been used to bring about an approximation to France, and his sympathy with English thought, English tastes, and, above all, English ideals of government was notorious. Early in his reign, his English enthusiasms were much discussed, and in the royal nursery the English governess, Miss Dickens, was omnipotent. Her decisions on English practice were final. It is related that shortly before the birth of Princess Mafalda she was called hurriedly to the Queen. On entering the room she found the King engaged in an amiable dispute with his wife. "Is it not so," he said, turning to Miss Dickens; "the English always wear goloshes on the grass when it is damp?" "I am sure they would not do anything so silly," broke in the Queen, "and even if they do," she added rebelliously, "that is no reason why I should. I have been on damp grass all my life and never took any harm. Ugly things" (referring to the goloshes), "let the English keep them." Perhaps the story is an invention, but if Victor Emmanuel is not devoted to English goloshes, he is undoubtedly devoted to English ideals.

His action when the crisis arrived, and when it became his duty to deal with the situation created by the resignation of Signor Salandra, was a true interpretation of the spirit of the people. The resignation was the Prime Minister's final challenge to the foes of intervention. It seemed for a moment that they had won, but only for a moment. The stroke swept away the web of diplomacy that had been woven around the position and released the feeling of the nation. And in giving that feeling free play Victor Emmanuel was not overborne by mob emotion, as the German Chancellor suggested. He was, as he has always been, the embodiment of the national spirit of his country. Italy, after a generation of bondage to ideals which were not her ideals, to

allies with whom she had neither spiritual affinities nor political coherences, had broken the chains that Bismarck had forged for her. The free genius of her people was released, and the passion for liberty that had regenerated her in the past found its true expression in the struggle for the freedom of the world.

M. VENIZELOS

In the great tragedy that has taken the world for its stage, there are many minor dramas which pass almost unnoticed, not because they are insignificant but because they are overshadowed by the central theme. We have no attention to spare for the by-play. And yet that by-play has a vital bearing upon the main struggle. It may even turn the scales of victory or defeat. It was only in his heel that Achilles was mortal; but it was enough.

It is for this reason that the conflict between M. Venizelos and the King of Greece, which resulted in the retirement of the great statesman, is of importance It was a disaster to Greece, but it was much more than that. It was one of the worst blows that the cause of the Allies had yet sustained in the war. The heel of the European Achilles is the Balkans, that disturbed region which is so largely the source of the trouble and the support of which to either side would be so decisive a factor in the struggle. So far only two of the five powers in the Balkans (three if we include little Montenegro) are engaged in the war, the Serbians on the side of the Allies, the Turks on the side of the German Alliance. For nine months the three other powers, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece, have remained neutral. Had they intervened on the side of the Allies the end of the war would have been hastened, for Italy would have entered the conflict earlier and the isolation of the Austro-German position would have been complete.

The failure of these powers to intervene is due to

complex causes. Primarily it is due to that tragic episode, the second Balkan War, which left Bulgaria broken, defeated, and nursing a fierce hatred, no longer of the Turk, but of her Christian neighbours, Greece, Serbia, and Rumania. It is not necessary here to attempt to apportion the blame for the collapse of the Balkan League that led to the second war and the Treaty of Bucharest. It is enough to deal with its fatal consequences. With the Bulgarian people consumed with thoughts of vengeance on their neighbours, only a miracle could bring about joint action on the war between them and Rumania and Greece. And without joint action there was little hope of any action, although both in Rumania and Greece there was an overwhelming popular demand for war.

Now there was one man and one man only who was capable of working the miracle. It was M. Venizelos, the Greek Premier. M. Venizelos is among the greatest statesmen in Europe to-day. That is a large claim, but history will ratify it. His public career, so far as Europe is concerned, extends over only five years, but in that time he has revealed to the world one of the most remarkable personalities in the political history of Europe. He has been compared to Cavour, to Gambetta, to Bismarck. The fact is significant of the impression he creates. You look for his parallel only in the ranks of the greatest. But the comparison with Bismarck, while true in regard to his relation to Greece, is monstrous in relation to the man. Brutal force was the dominant note of Bismarck. There is force in Venizelos too, a high courage that led him out into the mountains of Crete at the head of his rebels when Prince George of Greece, the High Commissioner, dared to play the autocrat in that little island.

But it is force governed by a spiritual motive and a

humane wisdom that suggests the Lincolns and the Mazzinis rather than the Bismarcks. The mere presence of the man is singularly assuring. I recall that famous dinner given to the Balkan delegates in London in the midst of the first Balkan War when all our hopes were so high, and I remember how the personality of the man stood out from the commonplace figures of his colleagues. And the impression was deepened by personal contact. He pervades the atmosphere with the sense of high purpose and noble sympathies. It is not his strength that you remember, but a certain illuminated and illuminating benevolence, a comprehensive humanity, a general friendliness of demeanour. He is in temperament what one may call a positive—a man of sympathies rather than antipathies, winning by the affections more than by diplomacy or cunning. He is singularly free from the small ingenuities and falsities of politics, and in all circumstances exhibits a simple candour and directness so unusual as to be almost incredible. But for the conviction that his personality conveys, you would believe that such frankness was only the subtle disguise of an artful politician. It is instead the mark of a man great enough to be himself, to declare his purposes, to live always in the light, fearless of consequences. Whether his opponent be king or people, he will tell the truth, without bitterness but without hesitation, for he is neither demagogue nor courtier. We have seen with what firmness of mind he can face the throne—that throne which he has done more than any man to make secure. But he can face the people with equal firmness. Right at the threshold of his career in Greece he showed this quality in circumstances of unusual difficulty. The lamentable condition of public affairs had reduced the country to despair. It seemed to have fallen among thieves. Its public

life was corrupt, its government a system of "Rotativist" plunder, its taxation crushing to the poor, its army (as the war with Turkey in 1897 had shown) a sham and its navy a shadow. The position culminated in the military *coup d'état* of 1908, but the military League could not build the foundations of a new Greece, and the country cried out for a man. But where was he to be found in the midst of the little nests of political intriguers who had brought Greece to chaos?

It was then that the mind of the country turned to Crete. In that island a remarkable figure had appeared in politics. He was a Cretan, but a Cretan of Athenian origin, whose grandfather had fled from Greece a hundred years or so ago to escape the tyranny of the Turk. In the troubled events that led to the liberation of Crete from the Turk and its right of self-government under the suzerainty of the Sultan, this young barrister had been the leader of his people and he became the President of the new Cretan National Assembly. But the advent of Prince George, the brother of the present King of Greece, as High Commissioner was followed by a serious conflict between him and his Minister. Prince George aimed at governing the island despotically, but Venizelos had not overthrown the despotism of the Turk in order to set up a new despotism from Greece. He resigned office, put on his military uniform, and headed the insurrection of 1905 which led to the fall of Prince George and his disappearance to the seclusion of Paris, the refuge of all discredited potentates. Venizelos returned to power under a new High Commissioner, M. Zaimis, but the magic of his personality and the fame of his exploits had fired new hopes in Greece, and in the confusion of 1909, when the throne was trembling and the very nation seemed in dissolution, the democracy of Greece appealed to the man who had saved Crete to

come and be its saviour also. And the late King George, pocketing the outrage that had been put upon his son by this man, wisely joined in the appeal.

He came and Greece hailed him as its deliverer; but he had smooth words neither for the King nor for the people. "We must tell the truth," he said, "to those above and those below." The Crown, he declared, had usurped too large a place in the functions of Government. And the democracy cried "A Daniel, a Daniel." But when the populace sought to convert his Revisionary Chamber into a Constituent Assembly which the King could not dissolve he stood by his bond. In front of his hotel in Athens the crowd corrected his word "Revisionary" by shouting "Constituent! Constituent!" but he simply proceeded with his speech, repeating "Revisionary" as though he was deaf to the storm of interruption. And at last the crowd, in sheer astonishment at this rebuke from a popular orator, were silenced. They had found a leader, not a demagogue.

That is the man. More than any one in politics today, he seems to come into affairs with a large inspiration outside all the petty considerations of parties and creeds, outside even mere national considerations. He is not a Cretan only, nor a Greek only; he is first and foremost a great European. He has that detachment of mind that is the strength of Sir Edward Grey, but he fuses it with an instructed idealism that adds the quality of the prophet to the wisdom of the statesman. In Greece he has wrought a miracle so swift, so convincing, that the popular reverence for him has something of idolatry mixed with it. He is regarded as the saviour, the regenerator, not of Greece only, but of the Hellenic idea. He found the country a by-word for the squalor of its public life and for the vulgar Chauvinism of its politicians. He has redeemed its administration, en-

nobled its spirit, doubled its area. In two short years he gave it a new and stable constitution, set the throne on its feet, reformed the army and navy, swept away the iniquitous taxation of the poor, redressed the miserable lot of the peasantry.

But the greatest gift he offered to the Greeks was a larger and nobler vision of their relations to their neighbours. The old bitter quarrel with Bulgaria yielded to his fine doctrine that "we have not only to think of our own rights, but of the rights of others." He sought the regeneration not only of Greece, but of the Balkans, and largely under his inspiration there came to birth that Balkan League which wrought the overthrow of the Turk, and seemed to have cleared the clouds from South-Eastern Europe for ever. The miserable collapse of that splendid enterprise was the work of malign influences from without and of vain ambitions within. How chivalrously Venizelos strove to avert the disaster is known. He risked even his authority in Greece by the concessions which he offered, for they included Kavala itself; but his magnanimity was in vain. The artful policy of Austria and the folly of Russia reawakened the slumbering fires of Balkan dissension. Serbia broke the pact with Bulgaria, and Bulgaria turned on her and Greece and suffered a swift and overwhelming disappointment. And it was that tragedy which kept the Balkan States out of the ranks of the Allies when the great war came.

But when that war came Venizelos very nearly repeated his miracle—very nearly rebuilt the Balkan League and threw its sword into the scale of the Allies. Why did he fail? "Kings," said a wise man who had known much of Courts, "are always the same. They never forget and they never forgive. They think of events only in the light of their own dignity." King Constantine is a

popular monarch. He has fought two successful wars (with the army that Venizelos recreated), and he has many excellent qualities. But he has not forgotten the indignity that Venizelos inflicted on his house in turning his brother out of Crete. He owes his throne to the statesman; but he owes him a grudge also and a grudge is always more enduring than gratitude. Moreover, his wife is a sister of the Kaiser and his sympathies in the war are naturally opposed to those of his people. Did he not, after the second Balkan War, flatter the Kaiser by saying that Greece owed its military success to Germany? It was a grotesque fable, for it was the French whom Venizelos had called in to reform the Army just as it was the English to whom he turned to reform the Navy. But there was this measure of truth in the flattery that the Greek officers had graduated in the German military academies. And this fact brings us to another cause of the defeat of Venizelos. The military leaders, unlike the people, are pro-German. That is natural. The militarist mind is always Prussian. It would be Prussian here if we were not fighting Prussia; for its unchanging doctrine is that of government by the sword. Finally, there was ranged against Venizelos all the crowd of tricky politicians whom he had swept out of power. They did not care about the war, or the Balkans, or democratic ideas. All they wanted was revenge on the great man who had stopped their pilfering politics and regenerated Greece and the Greek name.

So while Venizelos was working to blot out the grievances of Bulgaria, rebuild the League, and bring the Balkan powers with a united front to the support of the Allies and of the cause of the small nations, his enemies were working for his defeat. His scheme was simple. With that magnanimity which dwells outside racial bitterness and is prepared to make great sacrifices to

achieve great ends, he proposed to surrender Drama, Kavala, and Sarishaban to Bulgaria, with proper safeguards from the Allies in the case of failure and with the understanding that Greece would be rewarded after the war by the cession of the vilayet of Smyrna in Asia Minor which is pre-eminently Greek. Moreover, Bulgaria's grievance in regard to Macedonia was to be redressed by Serbia. It was a bold policy, calculated to arouse much opposition in Greece, which regards Kavala as the key to Salonika. But the prestige of Venizelos is so high that he would have carried the country with him.

Indeed, it seemed in February that his policy had won at home if not abroad. It was still doubtful whether Bulgaria could be reconciled on his terms for Ferdinand was pro-Austrian in sympathy, and though he would follow the line of personal advantage it was not yet clear that that line was on the side of the Allies. And his people certainly had reason for regarding the gifts of the Greeks with distrust. They had behaved badly in the second war, but so had their neighbours in Serbia and Greece, and the settlement of Bucharest was a flagrant wrong. They knew that they held the key of the Balkan position, that their intervention on either side would be a vital factor, and they were not disposed to sell themselves cheap. They had borne the brunt of the burden in clearing the Turks out of the Balkans and they had got little for their pains, and now they were disposed to drive a stern bargain and to get their own back out of the necessities of the belligerents. They did not want promises, but the immediate "delivery of the goods," and after the experience of the Treaty of London that attitude was not unnatural.

But Venizelos' wise action had paved the way to a basis of understanding and a decisive step by the Allies would do the rest. Their diplomacy unfortunately

was vitiated by Russia's own interests and ambitions in the Balkans, but a striking military success would serve. And there was no success which would be so impressive as the fall of Constantinople. It would put the Turks out of action, open up the Black Sea, and bring the Balkan States together on the side of the Allies. It was from these considerations that the idea of the attack on the Dardanelles sprang. It was a daring military adventure, but its motive was political. It was viewed with much disfavour by the British Admiralty, which I think took the view that at all events so great an enterprise should not be entered on until military support could be given to the naval operations. But the objections were over-ruled and the experiment of an exclusively naval attack was made with disastrous results.

It is probable that it would not have been made in that form and at that time had not the Allies believed that Venizelos would "win through." They were confident of large military support from Greece and perhaps gambled a little heavily for a stake so valuable as the support of all the Balkan States. That Venizelos did not consciously mislead goes without saying. He knew that he could answer for the Government of which he was the head and for the nation of which he was the trusted leader. He did not know that he could not answer for the king and that at the critical moment he would be deserted. Nor had he any ground for suspicion on the point. His scheme was, he says, endorsed by the king; but it was delayed, and in the meantime the intriguers, political and military, secured his Parliamentary overthrow. He resigned and the new Government of Gounaris set themselves to employ every device to delay an appeal to the country which they knew would result in the overwhelming return of the great Liberal leader. With clumsy recklessness they sought to destroy

M. Venizelos

him. They declared that his proposal to give Kavala to Bulgaria was not authorised by the king.

With characteristic directness, Venizelos appealed to King Constantine to clear his reputation and to defend him from insult. The king did neither. He did not even reply personally to the greatest servant that the throne of Greece has ever had. He replied through the Government and his reply was to the effect that Venizelos had misunderstood him. The retort of Venizelos was instant. He could not bandy words with his sovereign; but neither could he remain in public life under the accusation. He announced his retirement from politics as the only service that remained for him to perform for the king and the only course due to his own good name.

His temporary fall will rank among the most serious disasters of the war. It is true that his return to power was assured. There was hardly a constituency in the country that was not prepared to adopt him and his personal prestige never stood higher. But the moment was critical, and his opponents knew the importance of delay. They put every obstacle in the way of an immediate appeal to the country and it was not until midsummer that the election took place. The result was as every one anticipated. Venizelos was elected by an overwhelming majority; but the King's illness created new delays and in the interval that had elapsed the situation had been gravely compromised. The Dardanelles enterprise had assumed the magnitude of a great war, and the Balkan situation, uncontrolled by Venizelos' wise influence, had moved in a direction that filled all observers with concern. The Balkan States were still detached, still consumed with their own separatist aims, farther than ever from that solidarity which was the hope of the Allies. The sky which had been so bright in January had become dark with menace.

KING GUSTAV

THE Prussian doctrine of the unprovoked or "preventive" war has two advantages. It means military preparedness and diplomatic preparedness. Germany began the war not only with an overwhelming military advantage, but with an equally and almost more dangerous diplomatic advantage. With the bursting of the storm it revealed its concealed batteries in every country. Its agents were active from India to Chili, and—while the British Press Censor was performing his amazing feats of suppression, including the suppression of Sir Edward Grey's speech of August 3rd—its apologists were stating the German case in every tongue and giving neutral opinion the inspiration of Berlin. It was Bismarck who first taught Germany how to make the Press an engine of diplomacy. The revelations of Busch, his press agent, are a record of unexampled political cunning and immorality and of journalistic servility. His tradition survived his fall, and when the war broke out the Allies for a time found themselves beaten out of the field by the German propaganda in neutral countries. Britain, as the central ganglion of the cable system of the world, had the mechanical advantage, but it did not know how to use it. Nowhere was the lead of the Germans more conspicuous than in the Scandinavian countries, which, by an unfortunate arrangement, had been in the habit of receiving their supply of news from Reuter's through Wolff's Bureau in Berlin. The Bureau is for all practical purposes a department of the German Foreign Office, and it followed that when the crash came the Scandi-

navian countries were fed direct from the Wilhelmstrasse and were kept in almost complete ignorance of the English case. The mischief was corrected in time, for of course the connection of Reuter with Wolff was instantly broken, but grave harm had been done and the most serious peril only narrowly avoided.

For the situation in Sweden was one which justified the Kaiser in indulging in extravagant hopes that the country would give him practical sympathy if not active support. It had just passed through a serious national crisis, but it had passed through it without a real settlement of the issues that had been raised, and it was conceivable that the outbreak of war would fan those issues into a blaze, and that the nation, in spite of its passion for peace and its spiritual attachment to the cause of the Allies, would be stampeded into war. We can best appreciate the position by examining the crisis and its causes.

The crisis had long been foreseen by those who were familiar with the character and career of King Gustav V. and the democratic spirit of the Swedish people. A collision between two such discordant elements was inevitable. That it occurred on the Russian issue showed that the king had astuteness. He could not have challenged the principle of constitutional government in circumstances which gave him a better fighting chance of success. He seized an opportunity which enabled him to assume the rôle of the patriotic king at a moment when the mind of the country was genuinely disturbed by a vague external menace. The menace of course came from Russia, and it was aggravated by the fate of Finland. That unhappy country, with its brave people, its free institutions, and its splendid intellectual enthusiasm, had fallen under the remorseless heel of its great neighbour. There is no tragedy in Europe more

bitter than that of this small and highly civilised race, frowned upon by the guns of an alien fortress, its judges flung into prison, its freedom destroyed, its land overrun by Russian soldiers, its railways all designed for the purposes of military occupation and repression.

The fate that had overtaken Finland had shadowed the sky of Scandinavia. Throughout Sweden and Norway there was grave concern. What guarantee had they that the fate of Finland might not one day be theirs? They did not find any in the public spirit of Europe which was cynically indifferent to the small nations, and they watched with deepening distress the sanction which England gave to the designs of Russia. Meanwhile the strategic railways that had been built in Finland were brought right up to the Swedish frontier, and the air was full of the rumours of espionage. There had been many gravely disturbing episodes, notably the attempt of Russia in 1907 to fortify the Aland Islands, which would have closed the Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden and placed the country at the mercy of its great neighbour. That attempt had been thwarted largely by the action of this country, but subsequent events had only served to keep the alarm active. Even so recently as the spring of 1913 a troop of Russians had been over the Swedish border. The fact was kept out of the Press, but it could not be concealed, and it created the profoundest disquiet. In these circumstances only one feeling pervaded Sweden as to the necessity of national defence. If it was to preserve its freedom and neutrality it must rely on its own capacity to resist attack. On this point there was no difference of opinion between Liberals, Conservatives, and Social Democrats.

It is when we come to the question of means, or rather of procedure, that we touch the point of conflict—or rather the point of apparent conflict, for, as I shall show,

the real conflict was not on external but on internal policy. In the autumn of 1911 a great wave of Liberalism, comparable to that of 1906 in this country, swept over Sweden; 164 Liberals and Socialists being returned against 64 Conservatives. Mr. Staaf, a man of marked ability and high character, became Prime Minister, and he at once appointed a Commission, consisting of members of all parties, to inquire into the subject of national defence. That Commission had not yet reported, but two proposals had emerged. One related to the need of a large expenditure to make the existing defences efficient. With this need Mr. Staaf proposed to deal at once by raising £3,000,000 by means of a graduated tax on the larger properties. The other proposal was, that the period of service should be increased from eight to ten or even twelve months in order to permit of winter training. This proposal, however, Mr. Staaf would not put into effect until the country had given a decision on the subject at the election which was to take place in the autumn of 1914.

It was on this question that the crisis occurred. The Conservatives, angry at the threatened graduated tax on big incomes—a tax made necessary by the condition into which their administration had allowed the defences to fall—demanded that the period of service should be extended at once, and the king associated himself with their demand. He addressed a gathering of peasants, organised by the Conservatives, and declared that "he did not share the view that the question of military service should not be settled *now*." This challenge was promptly taken up by the Government and the people. A great demonstration, attended by nearly 50,000 people, was held in Stockholm in support of the Government, and as the result of an extremely unsatisfactory reply from the king to an expostulation on the subject of the speech

to the peasants, Mr. Staaf tendered the resignation of his ministry.

There was no reason to doubt the sincerity of the king in the matter; but there was as little reason to doubt that he deliberately chose the ground of his quarrel with the Liberal Administration. Unlike his father, King Oscar, who was an extremely amiable and conciliatory monarch, he had never borne the restraints of constitutionalism cheerfully. The great-grandson of Bernadotte, he should know as well as any man the perils of absolutism, for his great ancestor stood guard beside the scaffold in the Place de la Concorde when Louis XVI. was beheaded and he himself occupied the only throne that connects us with the Napoleonic tradition. Bernadotte retained it because he won the confidence of the Swedish people, and because he discreetly deserted Napoleon for the Allies when he saw the inevitable end approaching.

But King Gustav was not disposed to bow to the modern conception of kingship. He is that most unfortunate of men a constitutional monarch with an absolutist temperament. In this, as in all else, he is singularly unlike his father. Oscar was genial, expansive, all for compromise and peace. He cultivated the art of popularity with brilliant success, made every one at ease and talked with extraordinary fluency and enthusiasm on any subject. He had a genuine taste for art, and his second son is one of the most distinguished painters of Sweden. Gustav has none of his father's bonhomie and as little of his taste for artistic culture. He is tall, thin, and ascetic, rigid in bearing and opinion, fond of outdoor sports, especially tennis, of which he is a brilliant exponent, and of bridge. In personal contact with strangers he is shy, and a conversation with him is difficult and full of rather trying pauses. "He

has no sense of beauty and no care for it," said the late Mr. Augustus Hare, who in 1878, when Prince Gustav was in his twentieth year, acted as his travelling tutor, accompanying him to Rome and London, " but he has the most transparent, truthful, simple, loyal character I have known."

His father was a *charmeur*, and gave one the impression of insincerity. King Gustav is always sincere and always serious. He is not merely a teetotaler himself, but a temperance advocate, and in his earlier days did much by his example to further the cause among officers and men. His love of simplicity is notorious. When he came to the throne he refused to go through the elaborate ceremony of coronation, and on all occasions he discountenances pomp and display. His plainness of life and his sense of justice are illustrated by the story of how, during the illness of King Oscar, he settled a strike of the servants of his household for higher wages. Their complaints reached the ears of the Crown Prince, who called a meeting of the servants, took the chair, and asked each in turn his grievance. " You are quite right," he said at the end. " You should have told me of this before. I shall see that your wages are raised." His home life has been shadowed by the uncertain health of his wife, Queen Victoria, the daughter of a Grand Duke of Baden; but there has been no whisper against his private life.

But one may have all the private virtues and be an indifferent king, just as one may be an excellent Liberal in theory and in personal relationships an extremely illiberal and despotic person. Charles the First was rich in private virtues and personal charm; but as a king he was impossible. Cowley's description of him has been applied to King Gustav: " Never was there a more gracious prince or a more proper gentleman.

In every pleasure he was temperate, in conversation mild and grave, in friendship constant, to his servants liberal, to his queen faithful and loving, in battle brave, in sorrow and captivity resolved, in death most Christian and forgiving."

It is unfortunate that with all his excellent personal qualities his public attitude is mistaken and autocratic. He would, like Charles, be "a king indeed." His admiration for the Kaiser has been much commented on. It is an admiration not only for the man but for his conception of his office. On all critical occasions Gustav has shown his despotic temper. When his father yielded to the Liberals in 1901 he was opposed by the Crown Prince, and in the conflict with Norway Gustav adopted a no less anti-popular attitude. Had he had his way at the time of the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden he would have resisted that wise act. Indeed, when the conflict between the two countries over the question of separate consular services—a conflict which hastened the dissolution—was in progress he was anxious to march an army into Norway to reduce, as he put it, "his father's rebellious and disloyal subjects to entire submission." It was even suggested that he had entered into a secret understanding with the Kaiser which would have brought Germany into the threatened conflict with possibly disastrous results to Europe. His action over the consular service led to Norway cutting off his allowance, and as he refused to retract his words it was never renewed. When the dissolution took place he sought to get the deficiency made good by Sweden; but the Diet firmly declined to increase the civil list.

It is obvious from all this that a collision between the king and his parliament was inevitable. With the sweeping Liberal victory in 1911 it was made imminent. The Conservatives, angered at what seemed like their

complete and final obliteration, did not hesitate to adopt the familiar device of creating a Jingo panic against the Government. They coquetted with the militarists, who on their part were indignant with the Government for having for the first time appointed civil Army and Navy Ministers. And they found an easy instrument in the king, who told the peasants that he preferred to rely on the opinion of his military advisers. For months past there had been a growing irritation, and the disposition of the king to take an independent line and to ignore his ministers steadily developed. The crisis was only the culmination of the feud. The king chose his ground skilfully. He had exploited a very real fear that pervaded his people, and he had behind him the Conservatives and the country party.

The election which followed the resignation of the Staaf ministry had left a position of something like stalemate. A large Liberal and Socialist majority was returned, but Hr. Staaf's own followers had been substantially reduced, and of the three parties the Conservative was now the largest. In the circumstances the king called on Hr. Hammarskjöld to form a cabinet, the most distinguished member of which was Hr. Wallenberg, the Foreign Minister, a banker and a man of stainless reputation, high capacity, and disinterested patriotism.

This was the situation at the beginning of August. The internal crisis had passed for the time, but the issues that had raised it were only dormant. In the first challenge of the king to his parliament the king had won, but the struggle would be resumed. His partial success was not due to any failure in the democratic sentiment of the country, but to the distrust of Russia which was as prevalent among Liberals and Socialists as among Conservatives. It was that distrust upon

which the Kaiser relied in his calculations in regard to the Scandinavian position. He had much solid grounds for confidence. For years he had been watching the growing concern of the northern kingdoms about the intentions of Russia, and with that skill of which he is so accomplished a master he had assumed the rôle of the friend of Scandinavia just as he had made himself the patron of the Mahommedan world. His annual visits to the Norwegian waters were the occasion of astute acts of friendship and patronage (entirely wasted, let it be remarked, on the Norwegian people), and he had promoted the close intercourse of his country with the Swedish nation. That intercourse had become a dominant factor in the life of Sweden. In literature, as in commerce, the influence of Germany was in the ascendant, for the natural advantages which Germany had had been enhanced by that industrious attention to detail which is characteristic of the German system of peaceful penetration, promoted from the head and extending to the smallest interests of life. The Swedish people, with their love of peace, their devotion to the cause of nationality, and their advanced democratic leanings, were spiritually allied not to Germany, whose militarism they detested, but to England. That spiritual attachment, however, had little to feed on, for the English governmental system had no propagandist skill, and even the English news came filtered through Berlin. If the Kaiser was entitled to regard the fear of Russia as a sufficient offset against the popular democratic sympathies of Sweden, he was equally entitled to look to the king for sympathy with his cause. His temper, as we have seen, disposed him to favour the German view of kingship, and he had a powerful domestic attachment to Germany through his wife, whose activities on behalf of the German cause were so notori-

ous as to evoke severe public condemnation. Finally, Russia herself at the beginning of the war gave the Kaiser substantial help by issuing, with astonishing folly, the forecast of a new scheme which practically meant the obliteration of the few remnants of Finnish liberty. The scheme was quickly repudiated or explained away, but the harm it did could be measured by the sensation which was reflected at the time in the Swedish and Norwegian newspapers.

On the face of it, it seemed that the Kaiser had all the cards in his hand. He had but to play upon the fear of Russia in order to bring Sweden over to his side, and if Sweden, why not Scandinavia as a whole? He set to work with characteristic energy. Wolff's Bureau flooded the Scandinavian press with news made in Germany. But that was not enough. There lived in Berlin a son of Björnsen the dramatist. He had married a German wife and was in sympathy with his adopted country. What so natural as to convert a man with such a name into a newsagency for supplying Scandinavia with the pure milk of the Prussian gospel? The innocent Swedes might distrust Wolff. They could not distrust a Björnsen. Nor was this all. In the crisis through which Sweden had just passed, a conspicuous part on the king's side had been played by Dr. Sven Hedin, the explorer, who had been in the forefront of the anti-Russian and militarist campaign. When the war came he was the hot gospeller of the German cause, and he was promptly commandeered by the Kaiser to visit the battlefields and write up the German victories for the enlightenment of his countrymen. Meanwhile, German missionaries were spreading the true faith in Scandinavia itself. Baron von Kühlmann, fresh from England, where he had been the under-study to successive ambassadors, was missionary-in-chief—a smooth-

tongued person with an engaging air of frankness that only half hid as cunning a plotter as the Wilhelmstrasse ever sent out to lay diplomatic mines. Albert Süderkum, the Socialist deputy, was sent to win the Swedish Socialists to the cause of German kultur, and Professor Wilhelm Ostwald followed with an unofficial bribe to Sweden in the shape of a Baltic Empire, including Norway, Denmark, and Finland. It was to be under the protection of Germany and the official language was to be German. The incident, like so many others, showed how German diplomacy defeats all its elaborate scheming by a gaucherie due to its lack of imagination. Sweden was outraged by the offer of a bribe it did not want and would not have. It had long since passed through the crude and violent ambitions that obsessed the Prussian mind. It had had its days of glory and conquest while Prussia and the Hohenzollerns were mere supers on the stage of Europe, and it had no taste for the dreams of empire — much less an empire under German tutelage and talking the German tongue.

But even without this sublime piece of folly the hopes of the Kaiser were doomed. He had all the cards except the ace, and that was with the Allies. For with a sure and unfaltering instinct the heart of the Swedish people was with free England. There was a powerful pro-German element forming at the beginning of the war, perhaps even a majority of the population, but as the desolation of Belgium proceeded and the British case became known the current turned definitely and overwhelmingly against intervention. Even the deep and not unreasonable fear of Russia was overborne by faith in this country which, whatever its failures, had stood for the cause of liberty and for the rights of the small nationality. The triumph of Prussia and of the gospel of might would be the death-knell of freedom, and the

vision of a great Swedish empire was only a bait in a trap that would imprison the free soul of Scandinavia for ever. The tragedy of Belgium was before their eyes. What respect, what loyalty, what sympathy could Sweden look for from the authors of that colossal infamy? Herr Süderkum was given his hearing and his answer. It came from the pen of Hr. Branting, the leader of the Swedish Socialists and one of the ablest political thinkers in Europe. Süderkum returned discomfited and Ostwald went back amid a shout of mingled scorn and laughter.

The critical moment was passed, and the Kaiser's schemes had come to nought. Hr. Wallenberg held to the policy of neutrality with undeviating courage and arranged the meeting of the three kings at Malmo, which consolidated Scandinavia on a basis of non-intervention. And when, having failed to bribe Sweden, the Kaiser proceeded to attempt to coerce it by making its timber trade, the greatest of its industries, contraband, the failure of the German propaganda was consummated. The pro-German influence in high places was extinguished and Sweden's neutrality secure. No country has had a more difficult path to tread in this war, and she had pursued it bravely and honourably. The Allies will not forget this when peace comes.

MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG
AND GERMAN GENERALSHIP

THERE is an excellent story current just now which is not only amusing, but illuminating, and that for the reason that it was made in Germany and may be supposed, in some measure, to reflect German opinion. It takes the form of a forecast of the discussion of the terms of peace. Germany has won, and makes three demands upon England. First: an indemnity of a thousand million sterling. It is accepted. Second: the transfer of the British fleet to Germany. Even that is accepted. Third: the transfer to England of the German *corps diplomatique*. It is too much. No, says John Bull, rather than that we will fight to the last drop of our blood.

It may, in the light of events, seem strange that Germany should be dissatisfied with the results of her diplomacy. That diplomacy, it would seem, has had some conspicuous successes. It has involved Turkey in the war and so added enormously to the gravity of the Allies' task, and it has kept the Balkan States disunited and quiescent when every instinct should have prompted them to unity in the common cause of freedom. These were great triumphs, but they were the triumphs of diplomacy in corrupt conditions and working through the agency of puppet kings. Whenever Germany has had to deal with conditions calling for more reputable methods, her failure has been complete. The misunderstanding of the spirit of America is the most conspicuous case. She thought that America, because she was a non-militarist country, was a coward and could be

" bluffed " into the acceptance of Germany's bullying conditions. Her only achievement was to convert the United States into a potential enemy of the first magnitude. The failure of her great diplomatic campaign in Italy—though here it was conducted with much more skill and suavity by Prince Bülow—was even more serious. And in Scandinavia her elaborate preparations were defeated by her methods and ended in discomfiture.

But it is not only in diplomacy that Germany has failed. It may be that there will ultimately be a revised version of the story I have told, in which the final demand of Germany will be that, having agreed to take her diplomatists, we shall take her generals as well. For if the diplomacy of Germany has revealed a capacity for blundering that has astonished all the world, her generalship has not redressed the balance.

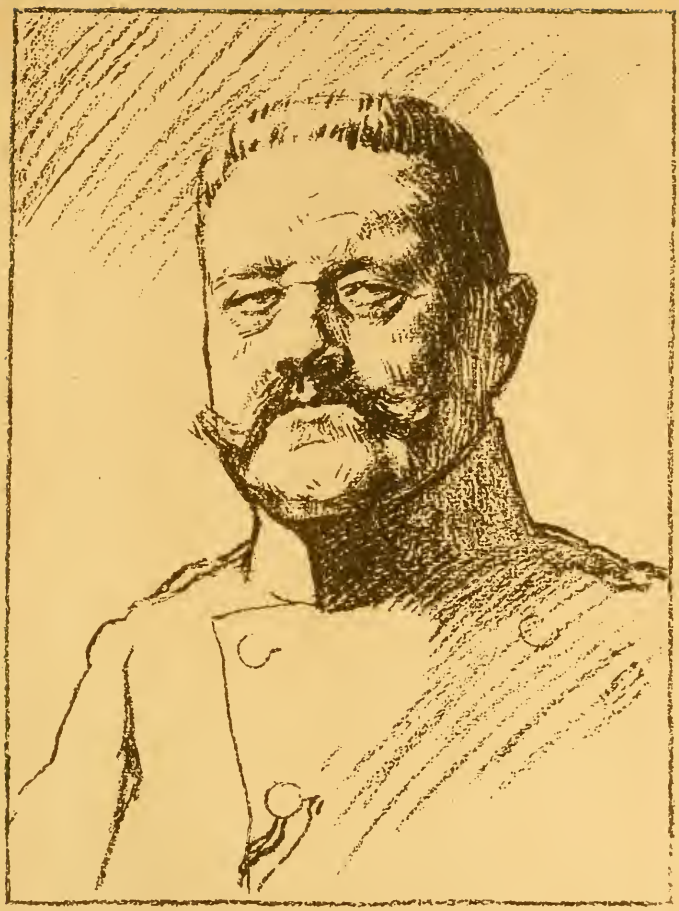
Nor is this a matter for astonishment. One of the ablest critics of the war of 1870 has said that the Prussian generalship in that struggle was inferior to anything in military history except the French generalship. And Bismarck's view was hardly less contemptuous. Through the letters which he wrote to his wife during the war there runs a note of unceasing complaint against the incompetence of the generals. He respects " good old von Moltke " and von Roon; but for the rest he has the most withering scorn. They blunder and blunder, and it is only the bravery of the men, he says, that saves the day.

The truth probably is that the Prussian genius is too mechanical and too doctrinaire to be productive of the highest qualities of generalship. It is governed by formulas, and if the formulas fail it lacks that swift adaptability to new conditions which is the secret of the supreme commanders. The great maxim of Napoleon, " Je m'engage, et puis je vois," has no place in its

iron regulations. In this it is true to the German genius which is methodical, intellectual, and industrious rather than germinal and inspirational. In all matters relating to the war which have involved careful thought, elaborate preparation, and an infinite capacity for taking pains the German military staff have established their superiority. Their theories and anticipations, on the whole, have been accurate, except, perhaps, in the case of the employment of the close formation. They had foreseen the collapse of the fortress of position before great mobile artillery, and in all the detail of trench warfare, as in the reversion to the hand grenade and the application of every scientific means to military ends, they led the way. It has become an axiom in the British Army that any method the Germans adopt generally proves to be right, and even on such a subject as the function of the officer in a charge there is now a widespread feeling that the enemy has adopted the sound view. The idea of the officer setting the note of fearless gallantry to his men no longer holds the field unchallenged. It is magnificent, but there are grave doubts as to whether it is war.

But in spite of all this, and in spite of the magnitude of its strategical conceptions, there remains the fact that German generalship in the field has failed to achieve the results which were not only expected but seemed implicit in the overwhelming superiority of organisation and material preparation.

It is probably the consciousness of this failure that is the secret of the extraordinary hero-worship of which Von Hindenburg has been made the subject throughout Germany. The psychology of a people is the truest guide to the realities of a military situation. Von Hindenburg himself has said that the war will be won by the side with the steadier nerves. Now nothing has been more remarkable in the earlier stages of the war than



General von Hindenburg

the contrast between the temper of Paris and London and the temper of Berlin. Both in France and in England there is a sense of resolution, equally removed from fear and extravagant hope. Throughout the war there have been no popular demonstrations, no maffickings, no outbursts of hate or jingo frenzy. The temper has been steady, grave, determined, and very silent. There has not been, either in London or Paris, a single great ebullition of public feeling since hostilities began. It is to Prussia that we have to go for the emotions of the war. Every success is made the occasion of extravagant rejoicing, the ringing of bells, the waving of flags, public holidays, decorated streets. It is a people hungry for victory and snatching eagerly at every crumb that is offered. Their infantile hate is as significant as their infantile joy. An American who was recently in Berlin has described to me his visit to a concert at a covered beer-garden there. The patriotic songs passed with ordinary applause; but at the "Hymn of Hate" the whole audience leapt on to the chairs and tables in a frenzy of passion. That scene would not be thinkable to-day in either London or Paris. Its significance is in the fact that Hate is the child of Fear.

But even more symptomatic of the "nerves" of Germany is the idolatry of Hindenburg. There is no parallel to the frantic enthusiasm that his name has evoked. If he had descended like an archangel from the skies, and swept the Russian armies before him into the Black Sea, there could have been no more extravagant acclamation. Towns and villages have been renamed after him; the Hindenburgstrasse would seem to have become as common as the Friedrichstrasse; the Universities have showered their dignities upon him; Hindenburg marches by the score have come for his

acceptance; hundreds of cigar merchants have implored him to permit them to associate his name with their products; honours and gifts, telegrams and decorations, have inundated him beyond any precedent. An iron statue of him has been erected in Berlin, and the citizens crowd round the colossal image as if it were the image of a god.

When one compares this prodigality of premature gratitude with the niggardly story of 1870, and remembers the growls of Bismarck because his son " Bill," after risking his life before Metz, could not, for all his father's influence, get a trifling recognition as a reward, we understand the change that has come over Prussia in the interval. This shallow emotionalism is a new growth. It springs from the same root as the sentimental considerations which have so largely governed German military action in the field, leading generals to attempt tasks not for practical reasons but in order to keep an anniversary, or to placate popular opinion, or to conceal a real reverse by a worthless demonstration or by actual falsification. All this is so unlike the Prussian spirit of 1870 as to predicate a new people.

Now undoubtedly the achievement which gave rise to the extravagant adulation of Hindenburg was a very notable thing. The victory of the Masurian lakes, which resulted in the destruction of three Russian army corps and the death of General Samsonov—not, it would seem, by his own hand as was generally believed—is the one indisputable triumph in the field on a large scale that can be put to Germany's credit at the end of nine months' war. Its military consequence has much diminished since the affair took place. Measured by the standards of past wars it was one of the greatest and most complete disasters in history, and in the horror of its circumstances—the shrieks of hosts of men and

horses sucked into those terrible swamps are said to have driven even some of the German officers insane—it has rarely been paralleled. But in the perspective of this vast war it is seen to shrink to small military dimensions. Its momentary effect was great; but it was a self-contained incident and left little permanent influence on the campaign, such as that left by the much less decisive defeat on the Marne which changed the whole current of the war.

But that it discovered a man of bold, original powers among the commonplace, "card-index" minds of the Prussian military hierarchy is clear. It is even conceivable that it discovered the only first-rate military intelligence that the war has produced. Nothing has been more remarkable in this colossal struggle than the shrinkage of the individual. Whether we look at the political or the military sphere, we find hardly a single figure that has added to its stature. On the contrary, the sense of personal failure is extraordinarily widespread. The fierce light that beats upon the drama reveals defects we had never suspected, and the strain of the immense trial is breaking the nerve of the strongest. It would seem that the vast forces we have summoned up are beyond the control of the human mind, that the monster we have created with all the cunning of science and intellect is crushing the great and the small with its fearful and ungoverned tramplings. Perhaps the future will see some dominant personal influences that commanded the lightnings. We do not see them now. The best that we see in our own military outlook is the imperturbable stubbornness of Joffre. The best that Germany sees is the impetus of Hindenburg. "Old Hindenburg," as they call him affectionately—he is not old as generalship in this war goes, being only sixty-seven—belongs to that type which in normal times is

dismissed by conventional official minds as a man ridden by his ideas and in times of stress is found to be a genius. The special subject of his supposed extravagance was the Masurian lakes. About the military meaning of this marshy region there were two views in Germany. The popular view was that, in the event of war, the Russians must not be permitted to reach this region. The heterodox view was that of Hindenburg who maintained that the Russians must be forced into the Masurian lakes. To this view he clung with an obstinacy that made him something of a "character," and when he heard that the Reichstag was about to consider a scheme for draining his beloved marshes and bringing the land under cultivation, he descended like a whirlwind on deputies and party leaders and committees, and when all this failed carried his cause to the Kaiser himself. There he prevailed. The marshes were saved and "Old Hindenburg" went on with his study of the region and every year at manœuvres punctually drove the "Russian" enemy into the swamps. "To-day we shall have a bath" was the proverbial saying of the soldiers when old Hindenburg was against them. "They knew that everything they could do was unavailing," says a German military student of Hindenburg's career. "If they attacked from the left, or from the right, if they made a frontal attack, or if they chased the enemy from the rear, if they were few or many, the end was always the same, Hindenburg entangled them hopelessly among the Masurian lakes. When the signal to break off the manœuvres was heard, the red army was invariably standing up to its neck in water."

But when the war came Hindenburg was in retirement at Hanover and forgotten. Indeed, it was rumoured that he was in disfavour with the Kaiser for having had the discourtesy to manœuvre even the

Supreme War Lord into the Masurian swamps. That is doubtless a fable; but it is difficult to understand why he was not sent at the beginning to conduct the campaign on the ground of whose military meaning he had made a life-long study. Weeks passed and his offer of service was ignored, and meantime the Russians were overrunning East Prussia. Then the boycott collapsed. "Suddenly," to use his own words, "there came a telegram informing me that the Emperor commissioned me to command the Eastern army. I really only had time to buy some woollen underclothing and to make my old uniform presentable again. Then came sleeping cars, saloon cars, locomotives—and so I journeyed to East Prussia like a prince. And so far everything has gone jolly well."

For he is a garrulous old boy. Perhaps it was that quality that made him distrusted, for there is a prejudice in favour of the silent man, who, after all, may only be silent because he is dull. Hindenburg is neither silent nor dull. He has something of the torrential gaiety and physical enjoyment of his job that characterises Lord Fisher, and he accepts the hero-worship of Germany with the unconcealed delight of a hungry boy who finds himself suddenly at the table of the Carlton or the Ritz. And he has humour. "Somebody," he says, "recently wrote to tell me that I should keep marching along the bank of a certain river—straight on to Petersburg. It isn't a bad idea and if the Russians would promise to keep on the other bank perhaps I would do it." He takes all the advice, and foot-warmers, and dignities that are showered on him cheerfully, but he is weary of receiving remedies for gall-stones. "Those gall-stones," he says, "are the plague of my life. Not a day passes without my getting sovereign remedies for them sent to me, whereas I never suffered from them in my life."

His failure to reach Warsaw during the winter somewhat dimmed his lustre, for in war it is the positive achievements alone which command popular applause. But it is probable that in military history Hindenburg's campaign in Poland will rank as one of the greatest military efforts of all time. The first feint against the Vistula, followed by the apparent forced withdrawal to Silesia, and from thence the sudden descent upon Central Poland, was an heroic conception, and though it failed in its positive object it succeeded in a negative purpose not less important. It changed the theatre of war and destroyed the menace to Cracow, and with it the threatened occupation of the great province of Silesia, from which the resources of the enemy are largely drawn. In scope and execution it is the biggest thing the enemy has done in the field, and if it has failed in its main object it is because Germany has undertaken a task which broke Napoleon, and undertaken it, as it were, with one hand. Hindenburg is not a Napoleon; but he is a very able general, and so long as he is in the field we must look for bold and imaginative strategy.

He will not save Germany any more than the superlative genius of Lee could save the Confederate cause; but he does redeem German generalship from the second-rateness that is its prevailing characteristic. Von Moltke, who was apparently never more than the shadow of a great name, has fallen: von Kluck has not rehabilitated himself since, in swerving from his path to Paris, he made his fatal march across the English front; von Hausen has been under a cloud since the same now distant occasion; the Crown Prince has become a jest; the Crown Prince of Bavaria has only distinguished himself by a very foolish and unsoldierly attack on England; and the Kaiser's intervention has been attended with unvarying failure.

The Supreme War Lord, indeed, would seem to have been the supreme blunderer. It was he who is generally believed to have been responsible for the failure of the attack on Calais which has been the crowning disaster to Germany. The strategists have unanimously condemned the squandering of that attack in four separate theatres—Arras, Armentières, Ypres, and the coast. The efforts were not all of the magnitude of that at Ypres, but they were none of them feints, and the lack of concentration is generally accepted as the true cause of that colossal and irrevocable failure.

If Bismarck could revisit the field of battle, what apoplectic wrath would fill the old man at the spectacle that German generalship presents to-day. What letters he would write to his wife to whom he was accustomed to disburden his contempt for courtiers and kings. What brutal things he would say about the Supreme War Lord. But I think he would have a respectful word for " Old Hindenburg."

KING NICHOLAS OF MONTENEGRO

In the clash of the great nations, the people of Montenegro and their King are forgotten. They answered the call to battle with the readiness of the most warlike race in Europe—a race that, encircled by great foes, has kept its freedom by its own unaided indomitable courage. But in the battle of millions its little host is swallowed up as completely as the rivulet is lost in the surge of Niagara. And yet, in a very real sense, Montenegro represents as truly as any the issues of the war. In all the history of the making of modern Europe there is no story so like a primeval legend as that of the people of the Black Mountain. We may see the spirit of that people in their King.

When Lord Newton visited King (then Prince) Nicholas of Montenegro at Cettinje in 1892, the talk turned on Gladstone. That great man had been the hero of the Prince. There was no one like him. It was he who had hurled the lightnings of his speech against the Turk; it was he who, in 1880, had established in the face of Austria Montenegro's claim to Dulcigno and secured the little mountain kingdom its seaboard. Now, however, his confidence in Gladstone was gone. He was not the mighty ruler he had believed him to be. He was a fallen and shattered idol. What was the meaning of the change? Lord Newton found that it was all because of "Jack-the-Ripper." "Why hasn't Gladstone caught the villain?" asked the Prince. What palsy had fallen upon that mighty arm that it could not

slay a mere assassin? And he shook his head sadly over the eclipse of so much splendour.

The incident tells us a good deal about the King and his kingdom. Nicholas is the most primitive sovereign in Europe. He is like a figure out of the "Book of Kings"—a living memory of the antique world that has become a legend. He is the patriarch of a shepherd people, less numerous than the inhabitants of Bradford or Nottingham, living scattered among the mountain fastnesses of a country half the size of Wales. He rules them not as a king, but as the father of a family or the head of a tribe, giving them laws and songs and dealing out to them justice like an Oriental cadi. In spite of his early education in Trieste and Paris, the modern movement has never touched him. He remains a peasant among peasants. Pork and plum brandy furnish his table, and if he is alone he is indifferent about a tablecloth. He often sleeps in his boots, and when he rides about on his donkey with his fur cap on his head and his feet and legs swathed in rough cloth, he is indistinguishable from the least of his subjects. His palace at Cettinje is a modest two-storied house, only distinguished from the houses around it by a flagstaff and a sentinel at the door. Cettinje itself is less a town than a village perched among the mountains—a village with two or three taverns, a chemist's shop, a photographer or two, a saddle-maker, and a sufficiency of tailors.

In all this archaic simplicity he is the true expression of his people. There is nothing in Europe comparable to this little clan of mountaineers. The Swiss have long since been tamed by the tourist into the ways of civilisation and the commonplace. William Tell has become an idle tale. Centuries have passed since the Welshmen used to sweep down from their crags and lay waste the outposts of the hated Saxon. They have found more

profitable ways with the Saxon than raiding his castles. They have sent a dictator to tax him and manage his affairs. But here in the mountains the dark ages still linger. Outside the enemy still prowls around. All the memories, legends, and songs of the people centre in their undying conflict with the Turk. That little band of crepe that you see around the cap they wear is a symbol of mourning—the most touching symbol extant in Europe. In it you may see the mourning of a nation—

> "a lamentation
> And an ancient tale of wrong."

It is five hundred years since that tragic day at Kossovo when the Serbian Kingdom was destroyed by the triumphant Turk, and that black band on the cap carries into the twentieth century the bitter memory of that day. From the fatal field George Balsha fled with his remnant to the Black Mountain, and there for five centuries they have been entrenched, the embattled shepherds of the hills, wasting and being wasted, every man a warrior, counting his honours by the Turks he has slain, his sorrows by the triumphs of his foe—his life an adventure, his very religion charged with the passions of a battle that never ends. There is no epic in our modern records like it. It had bred a race also unique—a race of giants, primitive, almost barbaric, fearless, like men to whom the atmosphere of danger is habitual: a simple, pastoral people, essentially masculine, belonging to the fourteenth rather than the twentieth century. The currents of our feverish modern world do not touch them.

They would not, for example, know what the suffragist movement meant. Women to them are what his wife was to Charles XI. of Sweden—"Madam, I married you to give me children, not to give me advice." They are

the toilers in the field—the hewers of wood and drawers of water for Man the magnificent. The Montenegrin never goes out with his wfe. The daring husband who showed himself in such company would expose himself to humiliation and ridicule. If he pass her in the street he will avoid a look or a salutation. He himself goes in glittering apparel—red waistcoat and gold braid, and fine girdle for his pistols, for all are armed. But the woman goes sadly in black, veiled. Give her a vote—how the mountains would shake with laughter at the thought.

It is to the credit of Nicholas that he stands ahead of his people in this regard. He is proud of his daughters. "No exports from Montenegro," he says indignantly, "how about my daughters? One is married to the King of Italy, two to Russian Grand Dukes who could buy up my country and not feel any poorer, and the fourth is Queen of Serbia. If these are not exports, I don't know what you call them." And he is proud, too, of the Montenegrin women, and has done much to lift them out of their servile state. To them, on the morrow of the terrible war with the Turks in 1876, he dedicated his most popular drama, *The Maiden of the Balkans*, from the prologue to which I give, from a French translation, these examples of his poetic eloquence:

"O Montenegrin women! I bless you! You who keep so deep in your hearts the love of the Fatherland, who have accompanied us on all the fields of battle, and who mourn only at the end of the fight for those who have perished.

"In your touching complaints you celebrate the death of heroes, and you encourage us to further exploits.

"Harassed, starved, your feet torn by the hard rocks, your clothes in shreds, you steal towards us, on the frontiers of the menaced land, bringing us arms and food.

. . . . . .

"In the midst of the thick smoke of powder and fire, hard by the

cross, the symbol of our liberty, I have seen your angel faces shine, our sisters! And giving way to my emotion (to the glow in my heart), I would fain have sung of your virtues, your sacrifices, your efforts, your ardent patriotism. . . .

"On the banks of the Zeta my imagination met a woman who cherished the same ideals as yours. I put in her mouth your deeds and your virtue. I made her live in my lines as I saw her in my dream, so that she may serve as an everlasting model to the young women of Montenegro."

He has a love for his country which only the perils it has passed could give. "It is not the largest country in the world," he admits—"not even the largest in the Balkans. But I would not exchange it for any other land under Heaven." And he loves his people too, so long as they let him have his own way. For he is an autocrat *sans phrase*. Once, it is true, he fell. It was his enthusiasm for Russia that did it—Russia his protector and his paymaster. When the Duma was established he plunged into constitutionalism too. And he did it thoroughly, manhood suffrage, all questions to be discussed, and so on. When he saw what it all meant, however, he clapped the troublesome leaders in prison with shaven heads and fettered limbs, then went "on strike" to his country house, and told the Skuptschina he would have nothing to do with it. The Skuptschina found that in the absence of such a vitally important part of the government machinery as Prince Nicholas the business of the State could not be transacted. They had, for instance, occasion to refer to foreign Powers on certain questions. "What is Prince Nicholas' view?" said the foreign Powers. "What is your opinion?" said the Skuptschina to the Prince. "I haven't an opinion," said the Prince. "I don't even exist." His victory was complete. The Skuptschina surrendered and implored him to return.

Fortunately the conflict between the Prince and his

Parliament was bridged over by the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which roused the Montenegrins to fury. They had, in 1875, gone with Serbia to war to rescue their kindred of Bosnia from the tyranny of the Turk; but when victory seemed assured Austria came in to defeat the reunion of the Serbian race, and since then the old hostility to the Turk had been turned against the new tyrant from the north. With the annexation of Bosnia in 1909 that hostility burst into flame. The people clamoured for war; but the old warrior would not have it. For with all his military ardour and genius—and in the war against the Turks in 1876 he revealed brilliant strategic qualities—he has the caution of the statesman. Thrice he has withstood the war fever of his people, and it is the highest tribute to his bravery and his patriotism that in doing so he has retained their confidence and devotion. It is a confidence which dates back to the 'sixties, when, after the Turks had ravaged the country with fire and sword, the young Prince set himself to organise his people afresh for war and peace, giving them not only a new military system but also a rudimentary educational system. He has sought to suppress the blood feud that still prevails amongst his fierce people; but not with entire success, and murder is still the most familiar crime in that semi-barbaric land. He, indeed, in his earlier days is alleged to have had a feud of his own which he carried through with terrible completeness.

But if he held his people back against Austria in 1909 he was their willing leader against the Turk in 1912. It was Montenegro that fired the first shot in the Balkan War, and Nicholas set out to what seemed like the last struggle with the foe of five centuries. "What a marching life is mine," he might have cried with Charlemagne. It is said that he hastened the war

in order to celebrate his birthday; but that is to do this wise old man of the mountains an injustice. He has never played the part of the irresponsible egoist. Even when at his Jubilee he succeeded in converting his Princedom into a Kingdom it was not vanity that inspired him, as it had inspired Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria. It was love of his little land. He would not have it subordinate to its neighbours. If Bulgaria was to be a Kingdom, Montenegro should be a Kingdom too. It was the Kingdom, not the Kingship, that he sought.

But even the Balkan War was not the end of his marching life. It was only the preliminary to the greatest struggle of all, the struggle in which at last the Serbian people were fighting for their unity against both their historic foes, not alone but with the support of every friend of freedom in Europe. When the war is over Nicholas will hang up his sword for the last time, and the days of the isolation of the little people of the Black Mountain will be over. How after such centuries of fighting they will consort with the lamb of peace is hard to imagine. Perhaps, absorbed in a Serbian reunion, they will emerge into a larger life. But not until the brave old King has taken his farewell. He is the last of the heroes of an ancient tradition. When he goes, modernism will come among the mountains. On some sunny day when peace reigns you may see the clash of the old and the new in his palace grounds. The old King rides forth, not on his donkey, but on his favourite horse, saluting familiarly with the ease of a perfect cavalier. He dashes across the park towards the tennis court where the young Princes Danilo and Mirko with the princesses are playing tennis in the midst of the Corps Diplomatique who mark and watch the game. The tough old conqueror of Mouktar and of Mahmoud-Pasha holds in small esteem this child's play, an impor-

tation from England, in which the man is often conquered by the woman. And perhaps with rough geniality he makes a sudden swerve into the midst of the onlookers, puts his horse over the net and then at full speed disappears in the wild gorges of the mountains, while the players, familiar with these robust freaks of the giant, resume their interrupted game with laughter.

The tennis player will succeed the old chieftain. Prince Danilo, with his motor-cars, his love for sport, his familiarity with half a dozen languages, his conventional foreign dress and his perfect manners, is centuries away from the old Montenegrin patriarch. He will take his place naturally among the other foreign and denationalised rulers of the Balkans. King Nicholas will end the tradition of the old Black Mountain princes, and will pass naturally into the realm of legend, where he will live for ever a brave and sagacious figure, the father of his people, sitting at his front door in the sunshine, accessible to the humblest peasant, and with a single soldier as sentinel; dealing out justice under a tree, like St. Louis; loving a good Slav ballad as much as plum brandy; making the songs of his people; giving them laws; leading them to victory. It is a figure on which history will dwell with affection—perhaps also with regret that the modern world has no place for the peasant King.

THE CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA

The failure of the Crown Prince is among the few gratifying personal episodes of the war. It is gratifying because the more the House of Hohenzollern is discredited the more hope there will be of the liberation of Germany in the future from the evil influence that has made her the outlaw of the human race. It is gratifying also because the Crown Prince played a leading part in the military conspiracy that led to the war. His relations with his father had been notoriously bad. For a period long anterior to the tragedy he had openly allied himself with the military extremists, and there is a widespread and well-informed opinion that it was the fear of his son that was largely responsible for the marked change which was apparent in the attitude of the Kaiser in August 1913—a change commented on in the memorable despatch of M. Jean Cambon, the French Ambassador in Berlin. The unpopularity of the Kaiser with the military party had long been a familiar topic in German society. It was believed that he would never be coerced into making the plunge, and he was openly accused of cowardice. In the Crown Prince was found an easy tool with which to bring the Kaiser to heel. The alliance of the heir-apparent with the war party became an open menace to the authority of the Kaiser. He saw his popularity with the dominant caste usurped by his son, and even his prestige with the people imperilled by the same challenge.

That challenge became apparent not only to Germany but the whole world through the Crown Prince's defiant

The Crown Prince of Prussia

action in connection with the notorious Zabern episode. That episode was the most flagrant example there had been of the military tyranny under which the German civilian existed. For some fancied affront to a young lieutenant on the part of certain youthful citizens, the military were allowed to run amok among the populace, to beat old men with the sword and imprison distinguished citizens. The outrage was too much even for the servile spirit of the German people, long inured to the insolence of the German officer, and as the result of the scenes in the Reichstag the Kaiser, throwing over the Chancellor, publicly rebuked Colonel von Reuter, who had been the head and front of the offending. But while he was making peace his son leapt into the quarrel on the other side and sent a telegram conveying his " Bravos " to the officer whom his father had sacrificed to the public indignation.

This escapade was, next to the earlier Reichstag episode, quite the most significant incident in a career which had provided Germany with abundant gossip and speculation for half a dozen years. It was significant, first, because the Crown Prince was no longer a boy. He was a man of thirty-three. But it was significant chiefly because it defined more clearly than anything that had gone before his attitude on the relations of the civil and military powers in Germany. When the Crown Prince wired his " Bravos " to the grotesque von Reuter, rattling his sword in the market-place of Zabern, he not only openly repudiated his father but proclaimed to Germany that the heir to the throne threw in his lot with the mailed fist against the people.

This fact was much more important than "the enchanting smile " about which so much was said in the popular descriptions of the Crown Prince. He certainly had that. His bright, debonair carriage gave him an easy

path to popular homage. The people liked this youthful figure, straight and slim, with the fair hair and blue eyes of the Saxon and the vivacious manner of one who was intoxicated with the wine of life. It was not difficult to believe the stories that were told of his good nature, of the "lifts" he gave to workmen in his motor-car, of his passion for his abundant children, of his enthusiasm for pretty faces, of his love of dancing and music-halls, of his wild night excursions from Danzig to Berlin to see some favourite of the stage, and all the rest of the small legends with which the industrious journalist appeals to the popular taste for gossip about the stars who dwell apart from our humble lives. A little penetration would have discovered that this youthful and dashing exuberance was only the glitter of a shallow and irresponsible character, whose career might very conceivably be a mere Rake's Progress. The air of high spirits, pleasant in the boy, became mere levity in the man, and on the two most recent of his official visits to this country—the latest, and surely the last, the coronation of King George —his bearing was the subject of comment. I recall especially his manner during the long ceremony in Westminster Abbey. It would have been excusable in a restless boy, but in a man of his age and position it gave the impression of an unschooled arrogance. But the Germans are accustomed to arrogance in their rulers, and it seems indisputable that the Crown Prince was popular in spite of his notorious frailties.

It was this personal popularity which used to be offered as the explanation of the conflict between the Kaiser and his eldest son. When the Crown Prince and his wife were sent off on a tour in the East, it was said that the Kaiser wanted to get rid of a dangerous rival in the affections of the people of Berlin. "There is only one ruler," he told the citizens of Frankfurt in

one of his bursts of splendid egoism, " and it is I." And he would certainly not tolerate a rival in his own household. But we need not suspect the Kaiser of a petty jealousy in his treatment of the Crown Prince. It is explicable on the ground of a family tradition. Kings rarely get on well with their eldest sons. The Hohenzollerns have not only dragooned their people: they have dragooned their children, from the time when old Frederick William clapped Frederick the Great in prison onwards. They have been martinets in their own family and the tyranny of the martinet usually leads to reprisals. It has done so in the present case. Until his son's marriage, the Kaiser held him in with the tightest of reins, and the lad, curbed and regarded then as rather sullen by comparison with his popular brother, Eitel Fritz, seemed to give little promise of trouble. But with his marriage to the daughter of the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin he took the bit in his teeth and bolted. The union made him at least as rich as his father, and with riches he asserted his independence of the paternal leading strings.

Hence the six years' war between the two. In theory there is nothing more beautifully simple than the management of children. Every experienced parent recalls those happy and innocent days when he planned out the future development of his offspring—thus and thus would he stimulate, advise, encourage them; thus and thus would they go; and then in due time his own failure would be cancelled and his ideal would live in the flesh. If he is wise he comes later to the philosophy of the sensible man who once said to me, " I have come to the conclusion that it is not possible to worry children into being what you want them to be, but that it is possible to preserve their affection—if you take trouble." It is a humble, disillusioned conclusion; but it is a wise

one. With all his accomplishments, however, the Kaiser is not a wise parent, and, never having been conspicuous for filial obedience himself, he naturally could not tolerate its absence in his own son. For we dislike nothing so much as the reflection of our own failings in those about us. The Hohenzollerns, in short, believe in discipline for everybody except themselves.

Between the martinet father and the insubordinate son the feud was open and flagrant. The more the Kaiser punished the Crown Prince the more he was the same—impulsive, defiant, wayward. He was " exiled " with his regiment to Danzig; but exile did not suppress him. It was from Danzig that he went down to Berlin to make that amazing scene in the Reichstag which set all Europe talking. His behaviour was an outrage to the Chancellor, but it was still more an outrage to the Kaiser, for the Chancellor is the personal Minister of his sovereign, and the Crown Prince's open repudiation of the policy of Herr Bethmann-Hollweg in regard to Morocco was equivalent to slapping his father's face before the whole world. It was said that he was confined as a punishment on his return to Danzig; but, if so, the lesson was as futile as those that had gone before, for the " Bravos " to von Reuter bore the same significance as the Reichstag episode. Whatever the original attitude of the Kaiser was to the incidents at Zabern, he had the good sense to make a scapegoat of the Chancellor when he saw that the Reichstag would stand no nonsense. In these circumstances his son's telegrams, though they anticipated his action, could have only one meaning. They were, if not an attack on his father, an attempt to dictate his policy for him.

In considering the bearing of all these and similar incidents upon the character of the Crown Prince, it was difficult to say how far they represented the de-

termination of a high-spirited young man to have that "place in the sun" which his father denied him, and how far they expressed his real sentiments. He might be simply kicking over the traces to remind his father that he could kick. On the other hand, it is to be observed that in the Zabern affair he was kicking not only his father, but the public, and that is a very unusual proceeding for heirs-apparent. It is customary for them to pose as the friends of the people. In this case the Crown Prince was deliberately anti-popular. That is, of course, the traditional attitude of the Hohenzollerns. They have governed their people with the mailed fist, but when they have been wise they have not proclaimed the fact. Frederick the Great clothed it under a guise of good-natured tolerance. When he was lampooned in the public streets, he had the lampoons placed in a more conspicuous position. "My people and I have an excellent understanding," he said. "They say what they like and I do what I like." The Kaiser has not the wit of his great ancestor; but he was learning something of his discretion. More than once he had trimmed his sails to the democratic breeze. He still proclaimed the divine right with his old Sinaitic authority, but there were evidences that in his heart he knew it was false and that there was no resting-place for a King except upon the sanction of his people. Again and again he bowed to the storm—over the Bülow budget, over the famous *Telegraph* interview, over Zabern. In each case the action of the Reichstag as the mouthpiece of the people had been accepted as the sovereign authority of the State. The Kaiser, in a word, seemed to be coming down, cautiously, undemonstratively, but irrevocably, from the old absolutist position. There was a noticeable decline during the years immediately preceding the war in those aggressive

hectorings that he had been accustomed to address to his people, and on one recent occasion he had even revealed to the world, through Dr. Hintze, an episode in which he appeared—*mirabile dictu!*—as the defender of constitutional government. On the day of his accession to the throne, he said, he found on his desk a letter written by his great-uncle, Frederick William IV., the first nominally constitutional ruler of Prussia, which that monarch had ordered to be handed to each of his successors immediately on his accession until its appeal had been complied with. The appeal was this: that the new occupant of the Throne should overthrow the Constitution before taking the accession oath. The Kaiser's father and grandfather had ignored the amazing legacy and passed it on. The Kaiser did not pass it on. He burned the letter. He told Dr. Hintze that he saw the possibility that some day, a young King—perhaps his mind strayed to Danzig as he spoke—receiving this criminal incitement, might attempt to act upon it. "I felt as if I had a powder barrel in the house and could not rest until it was destroyed," he said.

It is difficult to correlate this incident with the arrogant and despotic claims of the Kaiser; but we must not look for coherence in such a wayward and neurotic personality. He has his moments of illumination and this was one of them. And with his later tendency to accommodate himself to democratic sentiment he could hardly fail to be concerned about his heir who still dwelt in that fatal Elysium which most doomed monarchs have inhabited—that Elysium in which the temporary arrangements of men are supposed to have a divine and eternal sanction. The exit from that Elysium is usually a painful one. In the midst of the French Revolution, Catherine II. of Russia wrote to Marie Antoinette at the Tuileries a letter in which

she said: "Kings ought to proceed in their career, undisturbed by the cries of the people, as the moon pursues her course unimpeded by the howling of dogs." It was a brave sentiment. History soon made its comment on it in France, and the Kaiser, who has plenty of intelligence, feared that his rather foolish son might provoke the same comment in Germany.

It was not supposed at the time that the Crown Prince's insolent conduct in the Reichstag in regard to Morocco was directed against England. There was, indeed, a popular idea in Germany that this erratic young man had too great an enthusiasm for this country. The fact was a little unintelligible—as unintelligible, let us say, as the late King Edward's love for Republican France—for England, with its free institutions and its non-militarism, represented everything which the Crown Prince might be supposed to detest. But the affections of kings like the affections of commoners are not governed by politics, and the Crown Prince was supposed to have been seduced by our games and our customs, our clothes and even by ourselves. A serious attack was made on him in a section of the German Press, on the ground that, during the winter sports in Switzerland, he had not merely worn English clothes—which he commonly did—and used English terms, but that he had systematically cut the society of Germans in order to spend his time with English and Americans. He denied this impeachment afterwards, but he was indisputably fond of English country houses and of Americans, and his enthusiasm for British games, from golf to hockey and football, was as characteristic of his leanings as the intrepidity he showed in India in hunting the elephant and the tiger—in regard to which he wrote and published a narrative—and the daring of his exploits in the air which he was the first royal prince to invade. Love for our games

and for the customs of our country houses, however, would have been a poor basis on which to build confidence in regard to so essentially shallow a personality. He liked our games and our clothes because that was the measure of his understanding of this country. But beneath that superficial sympathy he had the Hohenzollern dislike of our free institutions and the Hohenzollern contempt for any governmental system that did not rest ostentatiously on the sword. His alliance with the militarist faction was a great, perhaps the decisive, asset of the war party. They had now a pistol to put at the head of the Kaiser, and looking at the war in the light of the personal conflict, it is not unreasonable to see in it the defeat of the Kaiser and the triumph of his son.

But whatever the relations of father and son in regard to the catastrophe may have been, they have equally suffered humiliation in the field. The one thing we know confidently about the Kaiser is, that he has been present at nearly every great check that has befallen his army, and it is very confidently held that it was his strategy which failed in the attempt to reach Calais last October, a failure which may ultimately be regarded as the most decisive event of the war. Nor, since the French centre gave way before him, has the Crown Prince won any distinction in the field. We must accept the scandals associated with his name, the plunder of chateaux and the domestic sensations, with caution. They may be true, for anything is possible with so trivial and light-minded a person, and the allegations of the Baroness de Baye as to his alleged depredations at her chateau at Champeaubert cannot be wholly dismissed. But the atmosphere of war is congenial to malicious inventions, and we are all rather too easily disposed at these times to believe anything which will add a deeper

dye to the enemy. But, putting aside these things, it is quite clear that the Crown Prince has been in a military sense entirely negligible. There was a moment, at the time of the battle of the Marne, when it seemed that he had the fate of Toul in his hands, but he failed, and since the retreat he has suffered complete eclipse. The long periods of silence in regard to him have been explained in various ways, sometimes by the specific statement that he was dead, sometimes by the allegation that his father had put him under arrest, and so on. That there have been sharp conflicts between the two would seem to be undoubted, and there is very detailed evidence that he was responsible for the heavy sacrifice in the capture of Longwy—a sacrifice which enraged the Kaiser and is said to have led to a painful scene between him and the general in command, who defended himself by declaring that "if my soldiers advanced in close formation against Longwy and were uselessly massacred it was by the orders of your son who, at the safe distance of 20 kilometres, kept on sending me the telephonic order, 'To the assault, always to the assault.'"

We get an authentic glimpse of him in Sven Hedin's preposterous book. The glimpse is all the more delightful because the author, inspired by the spirit of flunkeyism, is unconscious of the absurdity of the scene he describes:

"In the lower hall stood a number of officers in line, and opposite them some 20 soldiers formed up in the same way. Then came the Crown Prince William, tall, slim, and royally straight, dressed in a dazzling white tunic and wearing the Iron Cross of the first and second class; he walked with a firm step between the lines of soldiers. An adjutant followed him, carrying in a casket a number of Iron Crosses. The Crown Prince took one and handed it to the nearest officer. . . . Last night the Crown Prince distributed more Iron Crosses among the heroes of the day.

"Would you like to know what the German Crown Prince, the

Crown Prince of Prussia, eats for supper? Here is the menu—cabbage soup, boiled beef with horse-radish and potatoes, wild duck with salad, fruit, wine, and coffee with cigars."

There is the famous explorer's picture of his hero, painted in all seriousness and with the reverence of the honest flunkey. It is an exquisite scene—the "royally straight" young man, with his dazzling white tunic and his royally firm step, handing out iron crosses right and left from a box, and then partaking of his beef and greens just as though he were a mere mortal. One sees the honest flunkey gazing at the sublime spectacle with a sort of speechless admiration. And later he heard the royally straight young man talk of the war, and this is an example of the wisdom that fell from his royal lips: "Of the fighting men one sees practically nothing, for they are concealed by the ground and in the trenches, and it is rather dangerous to get too close to a bayonet charge—unless one's duty takes one there." One does not know whether to wonder most at the *naïveté* of the Crown Prince or that of the infatuated gentleman who solemnly records these flatulent nothings. But they serve one purpose. They reveal the Crown Prince to us. And the revelation reminds one of Charles II.'s remark about Prince George: "I've tried him drunk and I've tried him sober, and there's nothing in him either way."

KING FERDINAND

In those brilliant days of last July when Berlin and Vienna were making their calculations for the great adventure it is certain that Bulgaria played a large part in them. It was only a pawn in the game, but it was a pawn in a very critical position, and upon its operations would depend the course of events in one of the capital areas of the coming war. It might even turn the scale in the major theatre of that war.

In normal circumstances it would not have seemed possible for the Kaiser to have calculated on anything but the decisive hostility of the Bulgarian people. He had "put his money"—to use the phrase made famous by Lord Salisbury in the same connection—on Turkey, the historic enemy of Bulgaria. And his diplomacy, even as long ago as 1898, had begun to assume the patronage of the Moslem world. It was in his speech at Damascus in that year that he said: "The three hundred million Mohammedans who live scattered over the globe may be assured of this, that the German Emperor will be their friend at all times." The world laughed at the mingled insolence and vanity of the remark, but it was, in fact, an audacious declaration of world policy, as the Kruger telegram had been before it. He sent his greatest statesman, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, to build up German influence at the Porte, and even on the morrow of the Armenian massacres, when the streets of Constantinople were still red with Christian blood, he had shocked the world by sending a message of flattering patronage to Abdul Hamid. It was probably owing to his influence that the Germans

were the only Christian people in Constantinople who, during the massacre in that city, refused to shelter the Armenians. Even the revolution and the advent of the Young Turks did not affect his policy. He transferred his affections to the new rulers and made a tool of the ambitious Enver Pasha, and the inertness of our own representation at Constantinople left his policy unobstructed. In all the collateral circumstances which led to the great tragedy there were few more regrettable than the failure of this country to maintain the friendship of the Young Turk movement. In that movement, as in most, there were conflicting motives, but at the beginning I believe the main motive was a genuine Liberal enthusiasm.

That was certainly the impression at the historic dinner at the Hotel Cecil when representatives of all the English parties entertained the representatives of the new Ottoman Parliament. We felt that a better day had dawned at last in the Balkans and that Turkish misrule was at an end. But that hope died out. The Young Turk, cold-shouldered by our Embassy, fell under the influence of Germany, and the result revealed itself in the triumph of the evil elements of the movement, and the revival of the Turkifying policy of the past and the suppression of all the Liberal ideas with which the revolution began. The cry of tortured Macedonia rose from under the harrow of the New Turk as it had risen from under that of the old Turk. Three years later, the Balkan League, which had been a dream, became a reality with Bulgaria as its spearhead, and in a swift campaign the Turk was decisively and it seemed finally beaten. Constantinople itself would perhaps have fallen to the Bulgarians but for the opposition of Russia, which had no wish to see the city on the Bosphorus the capital of a great Balkan confederation.

This, as we can see to-day, was the turning-point of

much more than the fate of the Balkans. The Great Powers, looking on at the Balkan struggle with their hands upon their swords, watched events with very diverse sympathies. Hitherto those events had gone against Germany. Turkey, her protégé, whose officers she had trained and whose guns she had made, had been shattered, and the Balkan Powers, united for the first time in history, were triumphant. All her diplomacy at Constantinople had been in vain, her path to Salonika and Asia Minor seemed finally cut off, and in any coming struggle she would have to reckon on the hostility of South-Eastern Europe. It is probable that this moment was the gloomiest experience the Kaiser had had in the development of his far-reaching game.

But it was at this moment that the current turned in his favour, and the man who had most influence in turning it was probably King Ferdinand. Not the least of the advantages with which the Kaiser began the war were the sympathies of those who occupied the thrones of the outlying and secondary powers. Germany, with its prolific growth of royal houses, has always done a large export trade in royalties. Whenever a throne was vacant or a new throne was established, it was to Germany that the people in search of a king naturally went to market, and it was not often that they failed to find the article they required. The result has been profitable to the Kaiser. The bread cast upon the waters has come back in many days, " and buttered tu, for sartin," as Mr. Biglow would say. North and south there was the same phenomenon—the royal house in sympathy with Germany, the people in sympathy with the Allies. It is a fact which deserves to be carefully remembered by the democracy in all countries, for it has an important bearing on the part which the monarchical idea plays in the affairs of nations. In Greece the king

has the Kaiser's sister for his wife; in Roumania the throne is occupied by a Hohenzollern; in Sweden the king is connected with Germany by marriage; in Bulgaria the king is a Coburg-Orleanist. And no one, surveying the history of the war, can doubt how powerful has been that Germanic influence in the palaces in checking the popular sympathies of these countries.

But it is Ferdinand whose influence on events has been most subtle and most powerful. And as a preliminary to understanding why Bulgaria—which owes its freedom to Russia, which for centuries has been engaged in a fierce struggle with the Turk, which reverences the name of Gladstone more than that of any statesman, and which has always looked to England as its political champion—is in this supreme crisis found preserving a morose aloofness from the cause of the Allies, it is necessary to understand King Ferdinand.

In a house in Sofia, I have been told, there is a dead hand, preserved not as a relic but as a reminder. The house is the old home of the murdered Stambuloff, the hand is the hand of that rough-hewn patriot himself. One day the hand is to be buried. The day will be that on which Stambuloff's murder is avenged. It is an uncomfortable reflection for King Ferdinand.

And yet to live under the shadow of a dead hand seems the perfectly fitting destiny of Ferdinand, for he is the king of melodrama. Those people who suppose that melodrama is not true to life have not studied his story or his character. Both are transpontine. He is the very stuff of which the dreams of the playwright and the romancist are compact. There are times indeed when you almost doubt whether he was not invented by Dumas or Stevenson or Anthony Hope: you seem to see the movement of the wires and the face of the author between the wings enjoying the success of his triumphant

creation. When the curtain goes down the author will surely appear and thank you for your kind reception of the child of his invention.

As a matter of fact King Ferdinand was invented by his mother. It used to be said that Princess Clémentine was the cleverest woman in Europe. This only meant that she was a very skilful and ambitious intriguer. The daughter of King Louis Philippe and the widow of Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, she felt that her youngest and favourite child had a special claim upon Providence. She resolved that he should be a king by hook or by crook. Moreover, she had the assurance of a gipsy that he was destined like Macbeth for a throne, and Princess Clémentine was not a person to bandy words with a gipsy. She took the practical course, and prepared her son, from the cradle, for the career marked out for him. He was whisked from capital to capital, habituated to the company of princes, indoctrinated with the diplomatic subtleties of "The Prince," taught the facile graces of the *charmeur*, made to cultivate entomology as one of those hobbies that sit so prettily on potentates, coached in half a dozen languages, even in Hungarian, for one never knew from whence the call to kingship would come. Thrones might spring up or fall vacant anywhere. One must be ready to pounce. It is a beautiful idyll of maternal love—a modern inversion of the legend of the Roman matron who sacrificed her children to the State.

The moment came. One day some twenty-seven years ago, there sat in a Viennese beer garden a group of Bulgarian statesmen. They were returning empty-handed from their quest for a prince. They had a throne to offer, but had found no one hungry enough to take it. Nor was the reluctance of the European princelings surprising. Ten years had passed since

Bulgaria had won its freedom after five centuries of Turkish misrule. But it had only escaped from the tyranny of the Turk to fall under the shadow of Russia. The Tsar meant it to be the pawn in his own Balkan game. Poor Prince Alexander of Battenburg—brave, courageous, and beloved by the simple Bulgarian peasantry — had been dethroned, and any one who ventured to follow him had to face the menace of Russia. And without Russia none of the Powers would give him countenance. In this emergency one man stood like a rock between Bulgaria and the Russian. It was Stambuloff, the innkeeper's son. Rude and violent, a man who combined a sincere patriotism with uncouth manners and a genius for statesmanship, he had been largely responsible for throwing off the yoke of Turkey, and now fought with equal passion to resist Russian aggression. It was he who had sent out the commission to find a prince—the commission that now sat forlorn and unsuccessful in the Viennese beer garden. Enter Major Laabe. He learned their business—knew their business, indeed, for was he not the advance agent of the Prince-in-search-of-a-throne? "Why, gentlemen, there is just the man you want," said he, pointing to a young officer in the white tunic and gold-laced kepi of Austrian Hussars who was sitting near by—how accidentally one can only guess. "He is Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, grandson of Louis Philippe, a cousin of every crowned head in Europe, a favourite of the Emperor of Austria and the Tsar, and a man of wealth."

It is a delightful story and it may be true. In any case, the boat that a year before had brought the dethroned Alexander up the Danube took Ferdinand down. No prince ever entered upon a more precarious enterprise than his. Unrecognised by the Powers with-

Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria

out, faced by a masterful minister within, he seemed the princeling of an hour—a momentary incident in Bulgaria's troubled story. And yet at the end of twenty-five years his throne was secure, his country stable and prosperous, he was smiled on by the Powers, his princeship had become a kingship, he stood at the head of a triumphant army with the Turk under foot, and it seemed that he might emerge from the war the Emperor of the Balkans as the King of Prussia emerged from the war of 1870 the Emperor of the Germans. It was the triumph of a subtle diplomacy, motived by one dominating passion—personal ambition. There were some who, in their enthusiasm for Bulgaria, found in Ferdinand the chivalrous hero who had wrought the miracle. The success of his policy prejudiced their judgment of the man.

But if we are to understand Ferdinand we must distinguish between public results and private motives. It may be that no other instrument could have accomplished what this purely artificial monarch had accomplished for Bulgaria. The determination to "arrive" himself had enabled Bulgaria to arrive also. Between him and his people there is an immeasurable gulf fixed. A solid, somewhat dour, but very virile race, the Bulgarians have no point of contact in temperament or sympathies with their sovereign. He has had to conquer them, as he had to conquer the Powers and Stambuloff. They, a simple, undemonstrative people, were revolted by the vanity of their prince. While his neighbour, Nicholas of Montenegro, sat at his door and was accessible to any peasant, Ferdinand assumed the pose and habits of the grand monarque. Within a few days of his arrival he had refused to see the representatives of England, Austria, and Italy because they did not appear in the presence in uniform. No king in

Europe is hedged round with more pomp and ceremony than Ferdinand, travels in more regal style, assumes a more Olympian air, cultivates so extravagant an etiquette. Even his little son cannot ride abroad without a cavalcade and an ecclesiastical dignitary in attendance. His relative, the Comtesse de Paris, once said of him that he cared for nothing except titles and orders, and the industry with which for years he canvassed the Courts of Europe for a crown gives colour to the saying.

But vain though he is, his ambition soars beyond titles. His aims are imperial, but he will stoop low to conquer. Neither his faith, nor his dignity, nor loyalty to those who have served him are allowed to stand in the way of his march to power. When he found that Russia remained obdurate, even though Stambuloff had been removed, he bartered his faith and his word to win her smiles. He himself is a Roman Catholic, and when he married his first wife, Princess Marie Louise of Parma, he agreed that their children should be brought up in the faith of Rome. But when all else had failed to placate Russia, he had his son Boris " converted " to the Orthodox Church, in spite of the scorn of the world and the flight of his wife with her younger son to escape the outrage to her faith. " The West has pronounced its anathema against me," he said, but he had won his prize. Russia smiled on him, recognised him, and with that recognition came the countenance of all the Great Powers. The path to glory was at last clear.

But it was in the Stambuloff episode that his character was most startlingly revealed. It is a dark story. History could not show a more dramatic contrast of personalities than that provided by Ferdinand and the Minister who made him prince—the one all artifice, the other all primitive nature. Stambuloff was a ruthless man set in ruthless circumstances. He had one passion

—love of his country. To that passion he sacrificed everything and everybody—most of all he sacrificed himself. Turkey had been driven out of his vineyard; but the agents of Russia were overrunning it. He was alone in the midst of a web of plots and intrigues and he fought like a giant, mercilessly, cunningly. Meanwhile he was consolidating the country, constructing railways, developing its resources, giving it education, building up its army, laying the foundations of that power that was to win the respect of the world later. To him Ferdinand was only a necessary instrument in his scheme to defeat the machinations of Russia and to establish the freedom of his land. And he found him, instead, anxious only to be approved by Russia and the Powers. The liberty of Ferdinand's kingdom was threatened; his very life was in daily peril; he lived on the brink of a volcano, and yet his dreams were the dreams of pomp and vanity.

Two such men could not run permanently in harness. One may sympathise with the prince, for Stambuloff was "gey ill to live wi'." He had no reverence for princes and a mighty scorn for the shows of things. He was fighting a tremendous battle and was apt to forget his manners. "I cannot and will not be seen with you if you don't take that frippery off," he is said to have exclaimed when, his mind full of fierce actualities, he found himself in the presence of his prince, who was clothed in a wonderful coronation mantle of purple and ermine. "Some people will think you are mad. There are more urgent matters to be attended to than coronation mantles. For instance, your Highness might see that you get a more trustworthy bodyguard, or else——"

An uncomfortable master — a master who would neither flatter him nor betray him. For Russia intimated that she would be Bulgaria's friend if only Stambuloff

would surrender this usurper—if only Ferdinand could be sent the way of Alexander. But Stambuloff knew that to surrender the prince was to surrender Bulgaria. It was not the man he cared for, but the nationality of which he had become the symbol.

But if the minister would not betray the prince, the prince could desert the minister. One day, during his absence abroad, Ferdinand wrote an official letter forbidding Stambuloff to report to him, and declaring that his conduct was "infâme." Stambuloff resigned in a letter in which he said, "cela ne fait honneur ni au peuple bulgare, ni à son Prince, si l'activité d'un ministre bulgare doit être caractérisée par l'adjectif 'infâme.'"

Ferdinand was free. "Henceforth," he said, "I mean to rule as well as to reign." He has kept his word. But while Stambuloff lived the shadow of that terrible man hung over his path. It was said that he was to be brought to trial. It would have been well if he had been. There were plenty of crimes against him, for he had dipped his hands deep in the blood of those enemies whom he believed to be the enemies of his country. But he was not tried. Instead, his house was surrounded by spies; his steps were dogged wherever he went. He appealed to be allowed to go to Karlsbad for his health, but the request was refused by the Government. He then declared publicly that he was being kept in Sofia to be murdered. On the 15th July, 1895, in the streets of Sofia, with the police looking on, he was brutally butchered—not merely murdered but mutilated. Prince Ferdinand, who had gone to Karlsbad, telegraphed his grief to the widow and ordered his highest Court official to tender his condolences to her personally. The telegram was unanswered; the official was refused admission. Europe rang with the murder. Petkoff, who narrowly escaped death with his

friend, denounced the Prince; the *Svoboda* openly accused him and his Ministers of instigating the murder; the *Vossische Zeitung* said that "if any ordinary citizen of any State had been so incriminated as Prince Ferdinand had been, the man would have been arrested." No one was arrested; no one was punished.

It will be seen that those who dismiss King Ferdinand as a mere scented popinjay are mistaken. To have come a stranger into a land seething with rebellion—a land where he was to have been a prince in name and a mere instrument of policy in fact—to have matched himself against the Bulgarian Bismarck and overthrown him, to have won his crown and made himself "a King indeed," as despotic as any King in Europe, to stand at the end of twenty-five years at the head of an army that had astonished the world and at the head of a League that confronted Europe with a new political fact of the first magnitude—all this implies more than the vanity and the febrile futility with which his enemies credit him. He is "the artful Augustus" of a later Gibbon, a Napoleon the Third with more than Napoleon's calculation and statesmanship. "I am the rock against which the waves beat in vain," he said grandiloquently long ago—and his courtiers laughed. He is not that. But he is the supple artificer of greatness, innocent of scruple, swift to take fortune at the flood, one who "makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up," and has that wonderful instinct of self-preservation which enables him in all emergencies to fall lightly upon his feet. He applies the arts of the mediæval prince to Twentieth-Century conditions and Machiavelli himself would have little to teach him.

Now it would be unfair to suggest that all the responsibility for the course of events that left Bulgaria outside the orbit of the Allies, when the European war began,

rested on King Ferdinand. It was shared by others, by Serbia, by Russia to some extent, by the Bulgarian people themselves, certainly by M. Daneff, who, always with Bismarck and his methods in mind, aimed at a Bulgarian dominion in the Balkans. Indeed if we penetrate to the ultimate sources of things, Great Britain is perhaps as responsible as any. For it is not mere ingenuity that sees in the war that is devastating Europe to-day the outcome of the Berlin Treaty with which Disraeli wrought the wrong and dazzled his countrymen. With that sympathy for the Turk which is universally characteristic of the Jew, he became his saviour in Europe, destroyed the Treaty of San Stefano, and handed Macedonia back to be ground under his heel. Bismarck, watching events with his grim humour, saw that all was well. He was not going to be involved in the quarrel with Russia, for friendship with Russia was the unchanging key of his policy, and he declared that the Balkans were " not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier." But if he was not going to get into trouble with Russia himself he was quite happy to see Russia in trouble with others, and when Austria, anxious to protect her own interests in the Balkans, wanted to intervene in the war he astutely opposed the idea. He was right. A new abscess was formed in the Balkans. The war of 1877—or rather the crime that followed the war—was the seed of the Balkan war of 1912, and the wars of 1912–13 begot in large measure the European war of to-day.

But if many shoulders share the responsibility for the detachment of Bulgaria from its natural alliance with the Allies to-day, the main personal responsibility rests on King Ferdinand. He had risen from a wandering princeling to a monarch. He had in 1912 emerged from one of the most successful wars in history, and his

dream of a Balkan Empire, with himself as the Tsar of the Empire, seemed within reach. The genius of Venizelos had given reality and statesmanship to the Balkanic federation: Ferdinand would convert that federation into a dominion under his own sway. In pursuing this entirely personal aim he appealed unfortunately to the sentiment of his people. They are in many respects one of the most reputable peoples in Europe—honest, industrious, capable. But their success since they had thrown off the yoke of the Turk had filled them with ambitions. They believed themselves to be the master people of the Balkans and their leaders had cultivated the dream of a four-seas hegemony, a Bulgarian dominion extending to the shores of the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmora, the Ægean, and the Adriatic.

It was unfortunate that at the crisis of the war with Turkey, when the Balkan League was in peril, Bulgaria was represented at the conference in London and subsequently by M. Daneff rather than by the statesmanlike M. Gueshoff, as M. Venizelos understood would be the case. Why the change was made I do not know, but it had fatal consequences. M. Daneff is of the Prussian type of diplomatist. He believes in "hacking his way through," and though M. Venizelos risked his popularity in Greece by the concessions he was prepared to make, he could come to no terms with his blunt opponent, who insisted on having Salonika as well as Macedonia as his share of the Turkish plunder. And unhappily Serbia, under the mischievous influence of M. Hartwig, the Russian minister, and the still more mischievous action of Austria which refused to her any access to the Adriatic, was equally intractable. She tore up the agreement as to the distribution of territory which she had made with Bulgaria before the Turkish war, and set up claims to Southern Macedonia, claims which were

a direct breach of the Balkan treaty of 1912. She fell, in fact, into the trap which Austria had prepared for the hated Balkan Federation. That Federation must be broken up if the ambitions of Germany and Austria in South Eastern Europe were to be fulfilled and a quarrel between the Balkan States was the obvious means of breaking it up. By refusing Serbia an outlet to the sea in the West, Austria turned her for compensation in the direction of Bulgaria, and by that cunning stroke shattered the Federation and restored the old condition of hostility between the Balkan States.

But the disaster would have been avoided if King Ferdinand had worked loyally with Venizelos. He, however, seized the opportunity Serbia had given him to launch out on the conquest of the Balkans. That he authorised the attack which led to the final dissolution of the Balkan League and to the outbreak of the second Balkan war is a fact which is well known in diplomatic circles. It is proved collaterally by the strange episode of the prosecution after the war of General Savoff for corruption. That prosecution was suddenly dropped, and the only reason that exists for that unexplained fact is the allegation that Savoff threatened, unless the proceedings were stopped, to publish the order from King Ferdinand authorising the attack on Serbia.

Ambition never suffered a more disastrous fall. The Bulgarian armies, instead of marching triumphantly to Salonika and Nish, were overwhelmingly defeated by the Greeks and the Serbians, and in the subsequent conference at Bucharest Bulgaria saw her trophies from the war with Turkey reduced to the barest minimum. So far from having Salonika she was denied Kavala, which Venizelos had offered her as the price of the maintenance of the League. But her greatest humiliation was the loss of Southern Macedonia. Her claim to this

region was not merely founded in ambition and in the Balkan Treaty of February 1912, but sprang justly from the principle of nationality. For though the population of the Monastir vilayet is very mixed it is predominantly Bulgarian both in race and sympathy. The crime of King Ferdinand and his ministers had been punished by a sentence which all the world admitted to be unjust and a violation of those rights of nationality which are never outraged without disaster. Bulgaria retired from the Bucharest conference beaten, humiliated, and full of bitterness and thoughts of revenge. And when the European war came she stood aloof from the struggle, the centre of the discontent in the Balkans and the one obstacle to a decisive movement in favour of the Allies. Had the Balkan League survived, had the Treaty of London been insisted on by the Powers, had even the Treaty of Bucharest been a just settlement of the claims of the rivals there would have been an irresistible movement against Germany in the Balkans last August. Turkey would never have ventured to enter the struggle, and the popular sentiment of Greece, Bulgaria, and Roumania would have triumphed over the Germanic sympathies of the courts and brought those countries into the field with Serbia, under the inspiration of Balkan unity and freedom.

But Bulgaria would not move, and without Bulgaria none would move, for Roumania and Greece believed that if things went wrong Bulgaria would seize her moment for vengeance. And so the three powers stood watching the struggle, watching each other, watching their old enemy Turkey plunge into the fight, watching their old ally Serbia being bled white for freedom. Venizelos made a brave effort to restore the League and bring it to the help of the Allies, but the King of Greece brought his scheme to ruin and with his failure the Kaiser

had won in this critical field of the war. He had won because he had captured the active help of Turkey without incurring the active hostility of Turkey's historic enemies. He had had many helpers in escaping from the dark moment of 1912 when a united Balkans had overthrown the Turk and barred the German advance to the South-East. Russia's fear of a great Balkan Federation had helped him. Her check to Bulgaria when her armies were marching on Constantinople had helped him. The failure of the Allies to see that their supreme interest was to rebuild and maintain the Balkan League at all costs had helped him. The wrong done to Bulgaria by Greece, Serbia, and Roumania in the settlement of Bucharest had helped him. But it was the ambition of King Ferdinand that had helped him most. On the day that the monarch issued his order to Savoff to attack the Allies who had aided him to overthrow Turkey, he brought ruin to the Balkans and disaster to himself; but he brought joy to the heart of the Kaiser. He had achieved Balkan disunion, which was the hope of the Kaiser in the coming struggle, in place of Balkan unity, which, though unhappily they did not realise it, was the interest of the Allies.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

AND THE SPIRIT OF GERMANY

PARIS has many tragic memories, but it has no memory graven so deep as that of the morning of March 1, 1871. Famine had brought the city to surrender and the great siege was over. The terms of capitulation had been settled, and on this March morning, whose brightness was so out of key with the sadness that reigned throughout the fallen city, the Prussians were to enter as victors. It was a quarter to nine when, looking down the Avenue de la Grande Armée, the gloomy citizens assembled near the Arc de Triomphe—what a name for such a day!—saw the approach of the first outriders of the coming host. There were six or seven of them, and they were led by a big man on a brown horse, a lieutenant of the 2nd Hessian Hussars. He was the first specimen of the triumphant foe on whom the Parisians had set eyes, and they watched his advance with an interest that was none the less intense because it was charged with such bitter thoughts. Had they been able to read the future they would have watched him still more closely, for long after they were to hear of him again.

The young lieutenant reached the Arc de Triomphe, which was hidden by sandbags. What followed I give in the words of an Englishman who had been in Paris during the siege and had come out to witness the final scene of the great tragedy. "My Uhlan gives a look about, gazes up at the Triumphal Arch, trots his steed around it, as if looking for the way under it, and appar-

ently not clear how he is to pass beneath the grand arch, turns his horse's head and gallops back to his friends. The group presses forward and at the Arc de Triomphe the same manœuvre is repeated. Their disappointment at being baulked of their desire to pass under it like conquering heroes is too manifest not to be noticeable; but, putting the best face (a somewhat wry one) upon a clear case of *non possumus*, they gallop off, full tear, down the Avenue des Champs Elysées, and soon disappear."

That scene at the Arc de Triomphe has been described by the chief actor himself. "We advanced," he wrote, "at full gallop through the long empty avenue as far as the Arc de Triomphe. Here a dense mass of men rushed up at me and I was thinking I should have to make use of arms when I heard the well-known guttural sounds of the sons of Albion. 'What's your name?' 'What regiment?' etc. They were all of them newspaper correspondents." The reference to "guttural sounds" is delicious from a German; but the interesting fact is the omission of any allusion to the disappointment at finding no way of entering Paris under the great arch. It was a small thing, but it meant much to the military mind. If the superstitious saw in it an omen they are not without evidence of fulfilment. That check to the Prussian at the gates of Paris was one day to be repeated on a scale to which history offers no parallel.

Forty-four years passed by and the young lieutenant, young no longer, was once more in the centre of the world stage, his name on every lip, himself the sinister embodiment of the menace of Prussia as on that March morning he had been the embodiment of its triumph. In the interval he had become a general, a distinguished cavalry leader of the German army. But his fame, so far as the military world was concerned,

rested on his writings. He was the most illustrious of the host of authors who poured out the vast literature of war in Germany, the significance of which the world was so slow to realise. Some of his books had been translated into English, and it is interesting to recall to-day that one of them, *Cavalry in Future Wars*, had an introduction of warm approval from the pen of the most distinguished cavalry leader of the British Army, Sir John French. But the writer was still unknown to the English people who are normally as indifferent to the literature of war as to the literature of the Scarabee.

The war came like a bolt from the blue, and then one morning, while the world was still reeling under the blow, there appeared on the bookstalls an orange-coloured book with the German eagle silhouetted on the cover. Its title was *Germany and the Next War* ("Deutschland und der Nächste Krieg"). There has, I suppose, in all the history of books been nothing comparable to this apparition. In its ordinary form it had appeared two or three years before, been reviewed in the newspapers as an illustration of the mind of the German militarist school, and forgotten. But now it burst on the country like a shell and lit up the darkness like a tongue of flame. By the light of its astonishing candour the nation saw in one swift flash the meaning of the calamity into which the world had been plunged, understood what forces had triumphed in Germany, realised that the issue of the war was whether the world was to live under the rule of Krupps or the laws of freedom. The publication of the book will always be a capital illustration of the strange mentality of Prussia which has so baffled the world. It is not difficult to understand the type of mind that thinks as Bernhardi thinks. The militarist mind is the same everywhere and always thinks in the terms

of Force. But it is hard to understand the mental condition of the man who, thinking as Bernhardi thought, sits down to tell all his thoughts to the world. It is as if, in a spirit of intellectual abstraction, the polite burglar, meeting his intended victim, explains the crime he proposes to commit, how he intends to carry it out, and what he will do with the plunder. It is not that he wishes his victim to know; but that in his enthusiasm for his theories he forgets that his victim has ears and understanding. Indeed he forgets his victim altogether. He is a man talking aloud to himself He reminds one of that story of Coleridge who, taking Lamb by the button of his coat, began talking to him in the garden at Highgate. Lamb saw no way of escape except to cut off the button. This he did, leaving Coleridge talking to the Empyrean. Returning in the afternoon he looked over the hedge. There was Coleridge, the button between his fingers, still addressing the universe.

It is this philosophic detachment, coupled with an entire lack of the humour and imagination which enable you to "put yourself in his place" and to see the other man's point of view, which has puzzled the English mind in the conduct of Germany. It is as though we are in conflict with a people who live on another plane, move in another realm of morals, and are unconscious of the public opinion of the world. As an illustration of the lack of humour, what could be more illuminating than the spectacle of a nation screaming Lissauer's "Hymn of Hate" and adopting as its battle-cry the infantile "Gott strafe England." If we will try to conceive ourselves decorating our toys with "God punish Germany," and greeting each other solemnly in the morning with the same sentiment we shall have some appreciation of the mental condition of Germany and its lack of a sane and clarifying humour. And the

deficiency of imagination, of the understanding of the effect of things upon other minds, is illustrated not only by Bernhardi's books, but by nearly every public act of the Germans since the war began. Bethmann-Hollweg dismisses the undertaking of Germany to respect the neutrality of Belgium as "just a scrap of paper" and it is not until six months later that he realises the effect of that declaration on the mind of the world and proceeds to explain it away. The Germans desolate Belgium and murder its public men and then appeal to the American people, the most humane and sentimental people in the world, for sympathy. They torpedo ship-loads of helpless non-combatants, and while they are doing it ask the world to accept them as the champions of the freedom of the seas. It is not that they are cynical. Cynicism is the product of disillusionment and unfaith. It is rather that they are afflicted with a frightful seriousness that makes them indifferent to pity or humour or even ordinary caution. They have become obsessed by an idea, the idea of racial supremacy, of "Kultur" imposed by the sword in the interests of the inferior types. They burn and slay to redeem the world. Not since the Crescent came out of the desert with sword and flame has there been such a frenzy of fanaticism in which the passion of conquest is charged with the fervour of a fierce gospel of salvation. What is that gospel?

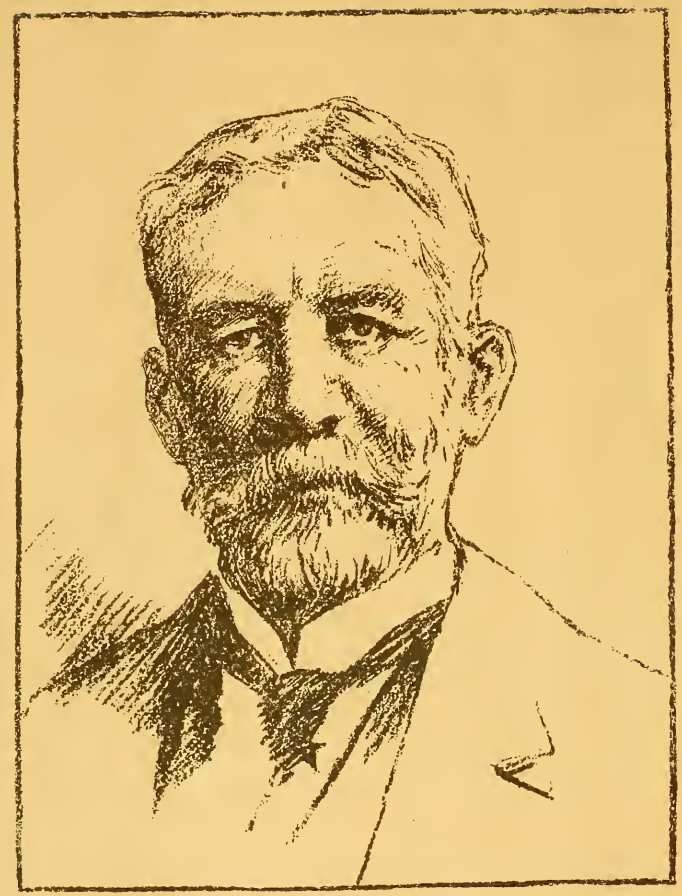
Through the window of the bedroom in which the doctor has imprisoned me for a day or two, there streams with the October sunlight the sound of a boy whistling the "Marseillaise" as he passes by. I do not mention the fact because it is unusual, but because it is usual. It is one of the incidents of the war that the great hymn of Liberty and Democracy has become the most familiar sound on this side of the channel,

and not in towns only, for it is as familiar in the lanes of Buckinghamshire as it is in the streets of London.

And I do not mention the fact as trivial, but as profoundly significant. It recalls the axiom of Fletcher of Saltoun about the songs of a people. It means that, with a sure instinct, the country has seized on the central fact of the struggle. The boy who is passing just now might not be able to give a very clear idea in words of what we are fighting about, but he knows that the heart of the matter is in the song that he whistles so lustily. And he is right.

To make the point clear, let me recall the assertion attributed to Hauptmann that the German soldier goes into battle with a copy of Nietzsche as well as Homer and Goethe in his pocket. If he made that assertion he felt that he could give no better assurance of the greatness of Germany's cause and of the enlightment and culture of her sons. Let us accept the statement for all it was intended to convey. We have our symbols: On the one side the soldier going to battle with Nietzsche in his pocket; on the other the soldier going to battle with the " Marseillaise " on his lips. Now the " Marseillaise " sang Europe free. In that great song the spirit of human liberty, human equality, human brotherhood found deathless utterance. What is the alternative that Nietzsche offers us? If we understand that we shall understand the spiritual motives behind the war.

Let us, however, first clear the ground of a possible objection. Not Nietzsche, it will be said, but Treitschke, embodies the soul of Germany—Treitschke who made the Prussian State his religion, the House of Hohenzollern his divinity, and war the instrument of salvation. It is true that Nietzsche was the foe of nationalism, that he talked of a United Europe and " a good European," and that, while Treitschke's political assertion of the



General von Bernhardi

doctrine of Might was filling his lecture room at Berlin, Nietzsche's books could hardly find a publisher. Nevertheless, it is Nietzsche who is the true prophet of the new religion. He is the fierce singer in the Prussian Israel. It was Treitschke's part to link the new religion to the State—to show that Prussia was the chosen people of the sword, the super-race of Nietzsche's vision.

Now it is not easy to state with clearness the philosophy of the tragic genius whose whole career was an unhappy sequence of physical suffering, intellectual revolt, and mental disorder, and who spent the last eleven years of his life in a madhouse. He is as full of contradictions as Ruskin whom he resembles in so many respects—in his discursiveness, his ferocity, his passionate revolt, his personal quarrels, his mental distress. But just as through all the apparent contradictions of Ruskin the lamp of spiritual beauty shines undimmed, so through all the contradictions of Nietzsche the gospel of brute force runs like a thread of steel. Ruskin loved humanity: Nietzsche hated humanity.

It is not an uncommon thing for the physically thwarted life to take revenge on itself by exalting physical violence and strength. Henley exhibited something of this paradox. But Nietzsche made Might his god. The universe for him had no moral significance. Life was a-moral and all the moral values associated with it were fictions which "the herd" had been able to impose on the individual for its protection. Thus "truthfulness" is a device of the herd to make men express themselves by clear and constant signs instead of concealing their purposes; "unselfishness" is a trick for benefiting the herd; "pity" is a parasite that preserves that which is ripe for death—a parasite that defeats the first principle of our humanity which is that "the weak and the botched shall perish."

Against all this morality of the herd, invented for the protection of the weak and the unfit, Nietzsche comes forward with his new scheme of values based on "the Will to Power." The universe is for the aristocrat, for the strong man, for the bird of prey. "It is not surprising," he says, "that the lambs should bear a grudge against the great birds of prey, but that is no reason for blaming the great birds of prey for taking the little lambs." And then, pursuing this allegory, he shows how the lambs (*i.e.*, the herd) call the bird of prey "evil" and that which is opposed to it (*i.e.*, the lambs) "good," and so reach that "slave morality" which he sets out to overthrow.

Not that he wants to get rid of the slaves. They are necessary to the aristocrat, for "Slavery is of the essence of Culture." The slaves may even preserve their morality among themselves. But that morality will have no meaning for the blonde masters, the elect, the "higher men" whose passion for Power will be the one uncontrolled motive of action. These are emancipated from the wretched gospel of current moral values. Pity, justice, truth — these things are not for them. The desire for Power will drive them forward reckless of consequences. "An order of rank will be established, based upon real values. There will be no remorse in man's heart any longer." And out of this cruel, ruthless exercise of might, there will emerge the Superman, the goal of all the ages, the fruit of all the austere sacrifices that men must make to produce him.

It is a little difficult to gather what he will be like, or whether he will be a man or a race of men. For sometimes Nietzsche, with that Napoleonic obsession which afflicts his type of deranged mind, suggested only one colossal figure towering over life, while later he seemed to conceive a race of supermen, divorced from

all " slave morality " and living like Pagan gods in free exercise of power without a purpose, except the purpose of fighting, the glory of action, the doing of great, fierce, cruel things.

For their only creed is the creed of valour, their only passion the love of war.

" Horribly clangs its silver bow; and although it comes like the night, war is nevertheless Apollo, the true divinity for consecrating and purifying States. . . . Ye say, a good cause will hallow even war? I say unto you: a good war hallows every cause. War and courage have done greater things than love of your neighbour. . . . Against the deviation of the State-ideal into a money-ideal the only remedy is war, and once again war, in the emotions of which this at any rate becomes clear, that in love to fatherland and prince the State produces an ethical impulse indicative of a much higher destiny."

It follows from all this that, while Nietzsche hated democracy and socialism, he hated most of all Christianity with its " slave morality " of pity, justice, truth, mercy, unselfishness, and its conception of God as the Deity of the sick, of " God degenerated into the contradiction of life instead of being its transfiguration and eternal Yea." To him, the son of the parsonage, Christianity is the triumph of the physiologically inferior people, of the slaves who, fearing their masters and wanting power, imposed this " curse," this " eternal blemish " on mankind. His proudest claim is that he is the Anti-Christ.

With all its splendour of rhetoric, its prophetic vision, its shattering originality, its frequent and noble inspiration, the gospel of Nietzsche is the gospel of the general paralytic. Megalomania and extravagant self-assertion are notorious symptoms of that disease. In the end

Nietzsche became his own Superman. His autobiographical *Ecce Homo* was a grotesque exaltation of his achievements, and he imagined himself now a famous criminal, now the King of Italy, now God. "Let us be happy," he would say. "I am God, I have made this caricature." And then, twenty-five years ago, he passed into the silence of the madhouse, from whence he never emerged alive.

But his religion of Valour—the Will to Power—remained. He who had been utterly neglected in life became suddenly the prophet of that young Germany which Treitschke had been preparing to conquer the world. His books passed through innumerable editions, his *Zarathustra* inspired Strauss' most famous work in which we may see the new gospel in the terms of music. And, not least significant, it is to Nietzsche that Bernhardi went for the text of that orange-covered book which unveiled Germany to the world last August. On the fly-leaf of that book is Nietzsche's saying that "War and courage have done greater things than love of your neighbour." In a dozen words it states the whole issue of the war.

Now this triumph of Nietzsche unlocks the secret of Germany. He has not, of course, any more than Treitschke, created the Prussian spirit or the Prussian ambitions; but he has given them watchwords and a faith. He did not write for Prussia, which, indeed, was the object of his hate, and, so far from deifying the State, he was the bitter enemy of nationalism. But Prussia has turned his teaching into its own channels. And that for a reason which is profoundly significant and worth considering.

In that remarkable and eloquent book, *Germany and England*—in which enthusiasm for German ideals and militarism is so strangely mingled with fear of Germany

—the late Professor Cramb forecast the present conflict. In doing so he gave the modern German view of the great movement of the German spirit through the centuries. Alaric broke the might of Rome, but in conquering Rome the Teutons were themselves conquered, for they adopted Rome's religion and Rome's culture. Their native instinct for religion was diverted into a false direction. But having once adopted the new faith, Germany strove to live that faith, and for more than thirty generations she has struggled and wrestled to see with eyes that were not her eyes, to worship a God that was not her God, to live with a world vision that was not her vision, and to strive for a heaven that was not her heaven. But her spirit lived on. Always beyond the grave of Christ she saw the grave of Balder, and higher than the New Jerusalem the shining walls of Asgard and Valhalla. With Luther she flung off Rome, with her "higher criticism" she undermined Galilee, and now, at the opening of the twentieth century, "Germany, her long travail past, is reunited to her pristine genius, her creative power in religion and in thought."

The faith of Galilee, the faith of renunciation, of pity, of love, the faith that scorns the flesh and looks beyond the grave is at last dethroned and the ancient religion of Valour, the religion of Odin, the War God, comes forth to battle, emancipated from the thraldom of fourteen centuries. In the light of this revelation we see with a new understanding that strange cult of Napoleonism which has dominated German thought. We have a new interpretation of that magic world of myth that Wagner's mighty genius created. These things were the foreshadowings of to-day. They announced the return of Odin to the earth. And the gospel is fully revealed in that Bible of Nietzsche which is in the German knapsack:

" Ye have heard how in old times it was said, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; but I say unto you, Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the poor in spirit; but I say unto you, Blessed are the great in soul and the free in spirit, for they shall enter into Valhalla. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the peace-makers; but I say unto you, Blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the sons of Jahve, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jahve."

And the children of Odin are not unworthy of their creed. Their word is a lie and their path is a track of desolation and death. The " hornéd men " that Odin of old sent forth against the new religion of peace and mercy left no stain like that of Belgium to insult the light of day. The Odin of old was a god of fire and sword, but he did not cant of Culture. He burned, but he did not say, as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* said in commenting on the destruction of Rheims Cathedral, that war would bring a nobler form of art. He slew the weak and the helpless, but he did not say that he was making way for richer forms of life. The Paganism of Culture which challenges Christianity is a far worse thing than the Paganism of heathendom which Christianity overthrew.

The Kaiser has taken Attila and his Huns as his model. But these horrors are not the work of real Huns. Attila did not talk of culture or call himself " the Scourge of God." He was a rapacious barbarian and did not affect to be anything else. But Belgium has been desolated in cold blood, on calculated principles, by a nation of philosophers and intellectuals. It has been butchered and outraged not from lust or revenge or even from cruelty. It has been butchered on a nicely considered theory and according to the doctrines of a savage faith.

And it is that faith with which we are concerned. For behind all the apparent and even real motives of the war—dynastic, commercial, racial, and so on—there is a profoundly spiritual motive. It is a conflict, not so much of nations as of ideals, not of kings but of religions. It will decide whether our civilisation is to rest on a material foundation or a moral foundation, whether it is to be governed by the calculations of the head or the intuitions of the soul, whether it is to be in its essence a spiritual or a mechanical force.

In claiming that in this conflict of ideals it is we who have our faces turned towards the light, it is not suggested that we are free from the idolatry of Force. The astonishing triumph of the mind over matter in the last two decades has left its mark deep on this country. The loosening of the foundations of faith has been accompanied, perhaps hastened, by a material mastery of the forces of nature that was undreamed of a generation ago. We have learned to sail the sky and to send engines of death through the depths of the sea; we have chained the lightnings and made the pulses of the air the invisible messengers of our will; we have invented guns that carry death for twenty miles and explosives more terrible than any thunderbolt. All this growth of material power has been unchecked by an equivalent growth of moral power or social conscience, and the result is a certain tyrannous exploitation of self based largely on the possession of material power. The Prussian spirit is not confined to Prussia. It is everywhere. That, and not the German people, is the ultimate enemy. The road-hog, who uses that hideous, bullying horn that sounds like a brutal curse on everything that impedes his path, is the symbol of the Prussian spirit in our midst.

But we have not made brute Force a national idol,

sustained by a philosophy and worshipped as a new religion. We may still broadly claim that wherever we have gone we have carried the spirit of freedom and the authority of the moral law. We tried the mailed fist once across the Atlantic and lost the United States and we have never tried it again. The Liberal faith saved Canada seventy years ago and it has saved the British Empire throughout. That is why Australia and Canada are sending their legions to us in our need —not grudgingly or of necessity, but cheerful givers. "Thy father has sent his son to me: I'll send my son to him."

Now the case is otherwise with Germany. In saying this do not let us forget to be just. After all, we are what our circumstances make us. We had the good fortune to inherit an island, with the inviolate seas for a defence and the free ocean as a pathway to all the world. Liberalism had a chance on such a soil. The Germans had the bad fortune to be cast in the midst of Europe, with Slavs to the East and Latins to the South and West. They lived with fear and survived by fighting.

And the weapon that had given them freedom became the idol of their worship. They fell, in a national sense, under the spell of a monster who has made all their wonderful genius and their fine character subservient to his will. The doctrine of Force by which they had "hacked their way through" became their gospel. Prussia imposed it on the rest of Germany. Treitschke, the prophet of the cult, preached it as ruthlessly against the inferior German States before the Federation as afterwards he preached it against other Powers. It ceased to be a means of defence and became the expression of the national spirit; and Bernhardi has stated the doctrine of purgation by war and the righteousness

of unprovoked wars with the cold abstractness of a college don.

The German people accepted the gospel as a necessity of their existence. They are of our own stock and in our land would have developed on our lines. But their position and their political development have placed them under the heel of militarism and at the mercy of the depotism that they hate but have been unable to destroy. The sense of enveloping danger, above all the sense of the vastness of the shadow of Russia have made them prisoners of the system that is the creation of the Prussian aristocracy and the cold-blooded philosophers of Might.

Perhaps they might have broken the enchantment if they had not been surrounded by fear. There is a striking passage in the White Book that shows that in those thrilling days that preceded the war Sir Edward Grey felt that fear was not baseless—the passage in which he undertook, if peace was preserved, to work for an arrangement which would secure Germany against any menace of hostile action by Russia, France, or ourselves. It is worth thinking about that passage and the light it throws on the past. The war came out of the spirit of fear as well as the doctrine of Force.

But it is with the latter that we now have to deal. It perverted all the energies of Germany to one terrific purpose—the purpose of making itself terrible in war. Its civil liberties were ground to powder by an insolent caste. Its astonishing genius for organisation became the instrument for military efficiency, and Bismarck's schemes of State Socialism were all governed by the twin purpose of making the people subservient at home and feared abroad. Even the nationalisation of the railways, admirable though its results have been, was designed not as a measure of social amelioration, but

as a measure of military necessity. Every ingenuity of the science of destruction has been developed with absorbing energy and no consideration of pity or humanity has been allowed to interfere with the decrees of the god of blood and iron. That deity has no bowels of compassion. He grinds the small nations he has undertaken to protect under his iron heel and talks of a sacred treaty as "a scrap of paper." He strews the seas with his engines of death regardless of what disaster they may bring to the innocent. He flings his bombs from the sky upon the sleeping city, scornful of women and children. He burns towns and villages and slaughters the old and the weak, not in anger or in lust, but according to an iron rule. He is merciless even with his own. He flings them in close formation on certain death. They must hack their way through or die. "Better to lose an army corps than change a plan." It is all Force, Force, Force, soulless and cruel and barbaric. It is divorced from all moral considerations, from mercy, from justice, from pity. It is an idol of iron that stands to-day in a sea of blood.

Caught in the toils of the great machine that had become their master, the German people became its slaves, and under the influence of their professors, who have always been the intellectual instrument of the military tyranny, returned to the faith of Odin. The great democratic movement of 1848 had failed and Bismarck had put the seal of despotism upon them. Denied the healthful expression of liberty, they found refuge in the doctrine of racial superiority. They could not free themselves, but they had a divine mission to enslave the world. It is a remarkable fact that the doctrine that the German nation were the chosen people of the earth—a doctrine which received its impulse from the war of 1870—came originally from a Frenchman

and that its chief exponent to-day is an Englishman. It was Count Gobineau, the French diplomatist, who first developed the idea of racial aristocracy and saw in the German people the conquering strain who should inherit the earth. The revolutionary spirit of France, with its assertion of the equality of men and its ideas of democracy, revolted his aristocratic instincts, and he found in Prussia his ideal not only of aristocratic government but of a super-race. He even discovered for himself a Teutonic origin. The idea of a super-race is not new. In a vague sense it is common to most nations; but in the western world it is only the Jews who have cultivated it as a creed, and it is significant that the Jew who has popularised Gobineau in this country has only one serious disagreement with his author, and that is that he should be so blind as to suggest that the Germans were the super-race when it was quite obvious that it was the Jews.

Naturally the Gobineau doctrine was agreeable to the German people, and with the failure of the democratic movement and the triumph of Bismarck it may be said that the idea of racial supremacy supplanted the Liberal idea. The Liberal movement practically ceased to exist, and though the socialistic gospel of Marx took deep root in the country it was always overshadowed and thwarted by the racial idea, which the Junkers and the militarists encouraged as an antidote to democracy. To this gospel Nietzsche contributed the poison of the Will to Power, and Treitschke the historical groundwork and the practical aims, while within recent years an Englishman, Mr. Houston Chamberlain, a son-in-law of Wagner, has carried the doctrine to a point at which extravagance borders on farce. But it is farce which the Kaiser, who is not any more remarkable for humour than his people, evidently took with profound serious-

ness, for he made the last of Chamberlain's works, with its exaltation of the Hohenzollerns and its suggestion that Christ Himself, if He was not a German, was at least not a Jew, the subject of extravagant approval.

All these influences that have been at work upon the soul of Germany are summarised in that book with which Bernhardi heralded the storm. It is not necessary here to recall the contents of that volume, with its naked assertion of the gospel of Might, its panegyrics on war as, in Treitschke's phrase, " the medicine of God," its justification of the unprovoked war, its scorn for the " poisonous " peace movement, its exaltation of the Germans as the warlike race, its declaration that " France must be so completely overthrown that she can never get in our way again," and its frank proposals for sweeping the decadent English out of the path of the people who were destined for world dominion. The progress of the war has led General Bernhardi to attempt to explain himself away. We do not recognise the prophet of war and the preacher of its " biological " justice in the author of those gentle messages to the Americans. But his book is on record against him. In it is the whole gospel of Odinism against which the world is at war.

Professor Cramb, in his enthusiasm for the religion of Valour, seemed to think that Odin was coming to triumph, if not in Germany, perhaps then in England. He was mistaken. This world is not going back to barbarism. We cannot live under the sanction of Attila and his Huns and the clank of the sword of Zabern, even though that sword be in our own hand.

This Europe that, only a few short months ago, seemed so secure and happy has grown up out of the darkness of the ages through suffering and sacrifice. Its spirit has been moulded by prophets and sages and inspired by poets and martyrs. It is not going to

sacrifice all that it has won, to turn its back upon the light towards which it has travelled so painfully, at the bidding of Bernhardi's drill sergeant. We understand very well the issue that is lit up by the flames of war. It is the issue of Paganism and Christianity. And in that issue is involved everything that, having, we treasure, or, having not, we seek—the liberties that men have wrung out of the agonies of a thousand years, the delicate growths of human and national relationships that have come to birth under the sanction of a humane religion, the spiritual equality which gives to the weak—even the weak State—the right to live his life without fear of the strong, the authority of the moral law in the affairs of men and nations, the supremacy of Right over Might, and of the spiritual over the material.

All these things perish from the earth if Odin and his prophet Nietzsche and his disciple Bernhardi prevail. But they will not prevail. The world will not exchange the morality of Christ for the mailed fist of Odin, and the democracies of the earth which have so slowly and painfully won their way to some measure of freedom will not yield to the Superman born on the threshold of a madhouse.

. . . . . .

The boy who goes by whistling the "Marseillaise" has the eternal truth on his lips. While that song rings in the heart of humanity Odin can never recover his ancient sway though his servant Krupp build guns as big as the Matterhorn.

SIR JOHN FRENCH

AND BRITISH GENERALSHIP

It is probable that no war since Bannockburn democratised the battlefield has been so revolutionary in method and resource as that into which Europe was plunged in August 1914. It was forty-four years since Germany and France had last been engaged in warfare on any considerable scale; over twelve years since England had been at war with the Boer republics, ten years since Russia had been at war with Japan. The echoes of the Balkan wars, it is true, had hardly died away; but those wars, bloody though they were, had the character of the wars of the past. The movements were rapid, the decisions swift, and the resources and methods employed were familiar. It was only in the Russo-Japanese war that any suggestion was given that the art and conduct of war were on the eve of vital changes, consequent upon the dominating influence which artillery had established in the field. The battle of Mukden was the precursor of the siege warfare which, with its dullness and its ugliness, was to supersede the romantic war of swift surprise, crashing blow, and shifting scene.

But in the ten years that had passed since Mukden there had been developments whose effect could only be to differentiate still further modern warfare from that of the past. The conquest of the air, the invention of wireless communication, the improvement in motor traction were among the most important of the factors

which came into operation, and inasmuch as the practice of warfare, like the practice of anything else, is largely governed by its tools it was clear that when war on the grand scale came it would be marked by new possibilities which could only be dimly imagined. What would be the relation of the mobile gun and the bomb-proof fort? Would Lord Sydenham's view that the fortress was effete and that earthworks were the essential corollary of modern artillery be justified? What place would the cavalry have in future encounters? Would it be rendered as obsolete by the motor vehicle as the cabhorse had been rendered obsolete by the "taxi"? Would its function as the vision of the army be assumed by the aeroplane? What was the true function of the air in warfare? Would the airship prove to be an effective military instrument, or would the aeroplane with its superiority in numbers and mobility reduce it to a clumsy futility?

These were typical of the questions to which only practical experience could furnish decisive answers. But so far as the calculable elements were concerned the advantage was, of course, decisively with that power which had made preparation for war its supreme function. That advantage was not limited to the specifically military equipment which Germany had organised with such astonishing thoroughness. It extended to the whole field of the national life, every department of which was developed with a view to its effective co-operation for the purposes of war. The contempt which Germany had for the military potentialities of Great Britain was not unreasonable. It was founded, not merely upon the negligible proportions of the British Army, but upon the fact that the whole conception of the state in this country was non-warlike and its organisation entirely industrial and pacific. We relied upon

the sea for our protection and still believed in the maxim of Chatham that "the Navy is the Standing Army of England"—a maxim in which a defensive and not an offensive attitude is implicit. Had the Prussian mind been more open to the teaching of history it would have understood, from such episodes as the American civil war, that great military resources may be latent in a non-military people; but it has been one of the mistakes of the Prussians to calculate only on the visible and the material forces and to ignore the human and spiritual forces that they have challenged.

But though, tested by the Continental scale, the British Army was negligible, there were two points in which it was important. It was small in numbers, but it was great in experience. It was the only professional army in Europe, and, apart from the Russian, it was the only army that had had the supreme qualifications of actual experience of war. It may be said with almost strict truth that when the German and French armies faced each other last August there was hardly a man on either side who had seen a shot fired in battle. The English Army, on the other hand, in addition to the qualities of the professional soldier who has served all over the world, had in it a powerful stiffening of seasoned men who had been through the South African War and had been inured to all the rough vicissitudes of battle.

And the second point was not less vital. The British Army was generalled by men all of whom were familiar with the practice of war and whose merits had been discovered not in manœuvres but on the battle-field. The importance of this fact in the early stages of the struggle was very great. It is one of the paradoxes of Lord Fisher that "disobedience is the whole art of war." "In peace," he will tell you, "you want a man who will obey orders. In war you want a man

Sir John French

who knows when to disobey them. Nelson disobeyed Jervis at St. Vincent and won the battle; he disobeyed at Copenhagen and bluffed the Danes into surrender." Perhaps it is a perilous maxim; but it is true that war is an art as well as a science and that one may have great success in the pedantries of manœuvres and be discovered to be a great fool in the presence of realities on the battlefield. Now, except for a few men like Hindenburg, Pau, and Castelnau, who as youngsters took part in the campaign of 1870, none of the generals on either the French or the German side had ever been under fire. They were theorists of war. They were the product of manœuvres and textbooks. They might be good men, but they had to be taken on trust. And the result was what might have been expected. Von Moltke was deposed within two months of the beginning of the war, and on both sides there was a rapid displacement of inefficient generals. Forty disappeared on the French side alone.

The case was different with the English. There was not an officer in high command in the Army who had not spent a large part of his life in active service in the field. Many of them bore the witness of old battlefields on their persons; all of them carried the symbols of some act of valour or some display of military talent. They had fought in many fields, on the frontiers of India, in Afghanistan, in Burmah, in Somaliland, in Egypt, but chiefly in South Africa. In that great struggle they had learned the meaning of war and had tasted all its bitterness. It had humbled them, and in humbling them had made them better students and better soldiers. No one who went through the South African War emerged from it wholly unpurged of military arrogance—that arrogance that is born in the classroom and dies on the battlefield.

The saying that South Africa is the grave of reputations is older than the second Boer War, but it was that war which gave it the significance that attaches to it to-day. Buller's failure, though most conspicuous, was only typical of what happened in the early stages of the war, and in the later stages Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, though more successful, cannot be said to have added to their reputations. There was, however, one exception to the depressing rule—one reputation which found in South Africa not a grave but a birthplace. Sir John French went into the war unknown to the world: he emerged from it with the most secure reputation as a fighting general in the British Army. This suggests no reflection of Lord Kitchener whose success has been that of the organiser of war rather than that of the general in the field.

If we ask what was the source of that deep and confident faith in Sir John French which was the product of the war we shall find that it was not merely the almost unvarying success which attended him, but the sense that in him there worked an original faculty of a very considerable kind. Now originality in any walk of life is hard to achieve. It is most difficult of all to achieve in the military profession, in which the law of discipline makes the free play of the mind seem like the most dangerous of all heresies. Discipline and originality are natural enemies, but they are enemies that have to be reconciled if the highest efficiency of an army is to be realised. It was this necessity which haunted Bernhardi when he was showing Germany how it was to win the next war. Prince Bülow has said that the spirit of discipline, even without enthusiasm, had enabled Prussia to march to victory in the past; but Bernhardi, like Scharnhorst before him, saw that in the new conditions of war mere reliance upon the unquestioning

discipline of the mass was not enough and he was never tired of preaching that, with discipline, there must be the element of individual initiative.

If this element is important in the case of the men it is vastly more important in the case of the officer. But the sterilising dominion of precedent and tradition in his case is most difficult to attack because it is founded not only in the idea of obedience but in professional pride. It is easy to confuse loyalty to the spirit of the profession, which should be constant, with loyalty to its methods, which should be varying. "It's a way we have in the army" becomes an easy formula for getting rid of thinking and for treating every one who dares to think as a dangerous person.

Now Sir John French is one of those men who are not terrorised by tradition. He has an independent life of the mind which enables him to shake himself free from conventional thought, and he encourages the same freedom in others. When he was appointed Chief of the General Staff in 1912 he issued a memorandum inviting officers to contribute to the pages of the new *Army Review* and to give expression to original ideas even though they differed from the doctrines of the official text-books. He has the wisdom to see that war is both a science and an art—that it is necessary to equip the mind with all the science of war, with all that has been thought and done by the masters in the past, and that it is equally necessary in action to be the master and not the slave of that science. Sir Evelyn Wood said recently that when he inspected Major French's regiment many years ago he asked a superior his opinion of the Major. "For ever reading military books" was the reply. And his sister, Mrs. Despard—under whose eye he was brought up after the death of his parents—has borne similar witness to his life-long concentration

upon the one theme that dominates his mind—the theory and practice of war.

For, in spite of an early predilection for preaching, he has been a soldier all his life. It is true that in obedience to the parental example—for his father, Captain French, of Ripple Vale, Kent, had been an officer in the Navy—young French, in 1866, at the age of fourteen, joined the senior service and served four years as a naval cadet on the *Britannia*. But the natural genius of the lad prevailed, and in 1874 he began his military career with a commission in the 19th Hussars. It was here that his independence of mind began to show itself, not in assertive eccentricity (for he is the most modest of men and his genius consists in the possession of common sense in an uncommon measure), but in the fresh and original thought he brought to bear on his profession. His regiment was not in those days a smart affair. It was one of those, formed after the Indian Mutiny, in which only small men were enlisted and which, in consequence, were known as the "Dumpies." The atmosphere of the officers' mess in the 19th Hussars was no better and no worse than the average in those days of dry rot. The military calling was merely a phase of the sporting equipment of a gentleman, and drill and manœuvres were rather dull and perfunctory incidents in an otherwise agreeable mode of life, while anything like the serious study of the science of war marked a man out as a curiosity, if not as rather a vulgar fellow. Soldiering was a sport which could only be degraded by study. And as for the cavalry, its chief function, as a witty cavalry officer said, was to give tone to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl. It needed a man of strong will and clear ideas to cut across such ingrained habits of thought and to set up a new professional standard, and John French was the man for the task. His influence

prevailed, and the subsequent reputation achieved by the 19th was chiefly due to his efforts.

His success here and always was more enduring because it was won in such a human and unpretentious way. He has not the grim aloofness of commanders like Wellington or Kitchener, nor does he cultivate the Napoleonic arts of flattery. But he succeeds nevertheless in conveying that impression which is essential to the great general—the impression that he has the secret of victory in him. Without that assurance an army goes into battle robbed of its most powerful asset. Sir John French conveys the impression, not by enveloping himself in an atmosphere of remoteness and mystery, but by giving the sense of a singularly sane, balanced, daylight mind, firm in its judgments, yet open to conviction; masterful, yet without the fatal blemish of vanity or ambition; instructed yet without the taint of the doctrinaire. He is, in a word, the ordinary man in an extraordinary degree, fearless of danger, imperturbable in action, free alike from exaltations and despairs, cool when the temperature is highest and warm when the blast is coldest, and, in all circumstances, human, generous, a little hot-tempered, and always comprehensible. One would be tempted to say that he was the typical Englishman, but for the fact that he is Irish.

But in spite of his high personal qualities and the universal affection with which he is regarded, his path has not been unobstructed. No man who thinks independently and acts on his thinking can expect that in a world governed by precedent—least of all can he expect it in an institution which like the Army makes every rut sacred. He became known to the conventional as a man with rather heretical notions about the use of cavalry—for example, he taught his men that they might

have to fight on foot—and he had the distinction (and, incidentally, the good fortune) to be passed over at a critical moment in his career by the late Duke of Cambridge to whom a new idea was perdition and the man who entertained it a peril. Even his successes were to the pedants gained by means so unorthodox as to rule him out as an unsafe man. Thus, when commanding the cavalry in the manœuvres of 1897 he achieved a brilliant success, his tactics were severely assailed as unsound and as involving undue risks, and nomination to the command of the cavalry in the Boer War was opposed on the ground that he was "inefficient to command in the field." Fortunately, General Buller had had experience of General French in Egypt, at Abu Klea and Metemneh, and he insisted on his appointment to the cavalry command.

Now if one judged war as a science only, as the Germans do, and not as an art, as Napoleon did, there would have been a reasonable case against the selection of French. For though he has been one of the most careful students of war of his time and, when at the War Office as Assistant Adjutant-General, devoted himself daily to working out tactical problems, he is essentially a pragmatist in war. He knows that war is too irrational, too incalculable a thing to be governed by rules—that every situation is unprecedented, is made up of factors, human, material, moral, that have never occurred in the same relation before, that in the last resource it is judgment, inspiration, common sense, informed by science but not controlled by it, which must be in command. To put it in another way, it is not a man's theories that count but his personality. It was possible to condemn French on his work in manœuvres because according to the rules he took too great risks, and manœuvres having no reality could not demonstrate that those risks were

warranted. Only actual war could reveal whether audacity and caution were in due equipoise.

And that was the revelation of the Boer War in regard to Sir John French. It showed that he had the genius for seizing a situation swiftly and truly, that he was always master of the whole sum, not only the sum of his own resources, but the sum of his enemy's resources, that his risks, though they might ignore rules, never ignored facts. As an example, take the best known but not the greatest of his achievements in the Boer War—the relief of Kimberley. When French hurled his cavalry division at the Boer lines he took risks which in manœuvres would have been denounced as fatal. By every theory of the text-books he should have been destroyed. Instead, the fury, unexpectedness, momentum of the act carried him through the storm unscathed. The clouds of dust flung up by the flying feet of the horses enveloped the charge in obscurity, and the Boers for once lost their heads and fired confusedly. Their line was pierced, they fled in disorder, and Kimberley was relieved. It was the first great success of the war. It was achieved in the teeth of all doctrine, and on the basis of actual present conditions, the meaning and values of which only a swift and sure intuition could reveal.

Or take that still greater, because more complex and sustained, feat at Koodoosrand Drift. French and his cavalry, worn out after the long action at Dronfield, were resting in the evening when news came that Cronje was fleeing to Bloemfontein with all his force, and that French must cut him off at Koodoosrand Drift. On the face of it so great a task was physically impossible to the exhausted horses and tired men, but French is never overawed by the "impossible." What does the soldier live for except to prove that the impossible is

possible and snatch victory as the reward? "Impossible? Is that all? Then the sooner we set about it the better," is his attitude. By midnight he was moving; by nine o'clock in the morning his advanced patrol came in sight of the enemy crossing the Modder in a confused mass, and never dreaming of danger from the west. The apparition of French across the path was as startling as the descent of Montrose at Inverlochy, or of Stonewall Jackson at Manasses Junction. But Cronje was in overwhelming superiority, and it was only by the most audacious "bluff," by spreading his little force over a wide front and giving the impression of numbers that French was able to hold the enemy in check until the panting infantry under Kitchener came up from the east and sealed Cronje's fate.

This incident disclosed qualities in French not less important than his brilliant daring—qualities which are proving invaluable in his present gigantic task. I refer to his unquestioning loyalty and his powers of endurance. Without them there would have been disaster in France. The co-operation of allies is always a delicate and perilous operation, and the relations of Sir John French and General Joffre were peculiarly susceptible to strain. French is not only a Field Marshal, and therefore Joffre's superior in rank, but he entered the war with a reputation established on the field of battle—a reputation second to none in Europe—while his chief had had no experience of war on a great scale. Nevertheless, the English commander has given the world an example of perfect loyalty, not merely in deed and word, but in spirit. And his endurance has been no less invaluable. It is not merely physical endurance. That, with his short, unromantic, but very serviceable figure, he possesses in an extraordinary degree. Weariness of body seems unknown to him. But even more

important is his mental endurance. There is a touch of habitual depression in Kitchener, just a little sense of impending disaster. But French has the unconquerable cheerfulness of the man who lives in the moment, bends all his faculties to the immediate task, and refuses to be terrorised by what is before or behind. It is not that he is without imagination. In the military sense he has abundance of that quality. It is that he is free from the temperamental moods of the artist and has that constancy of mind which is the first essential of the man of action. This quality was exhibited in a supreme degree in the first battle of Ypres. His generals came to him in despair. Their men had been fighting unceasingly for ten days and were at the last gasp. "Think of the enemy," he said, "they have been fighting unceasingly too and may be at their last gasp also. Hold on." And he was right. The next day the great thrust at Calais had collapsed and the most momentous battle since Waterloo had ended in the victory of the British.

It was this sense of stability and balance that marked him out for high command. The brilliant cavalry officer is not often a brilliant commander. His task is incidental rather than constructive, and his success comes from the impetuous rush of the spirit rather than from the steady glow of the mind. French's rare merit is that he combines the momentary inspiration of the cavalry leader with the power of surveying a large and complex situation from a detached point of view. In a word he has the power of thought as well as the instinct for action. This was shown in a very decisive way by the operations which he carried out in front of the Colesberg position. From the military point of view, those operations were the most conspicuous success of the war. It was in them that French found himself and the

military world discovered a leader of original power. During three months, by every art of finesse and "bluff," by skilful mystification, by caution that suddenly changed to audacity and audacity that changed to caution, by delicate calculations of time, of material values and of moral factors, he held in check a force often as much as five times greater than his own, a force, moreover, commanded by leaders of the high quality of Delarey and De Wet. It may be said that it was before Colesberg that French learned the art of generalship on the great scale and served his true apprenticeship for the most momentous task ever imposed upon a British General in the field.

It was there that we first saw in operation that very rare combination of qualities which his unassuming personality contains—the steadiness of mind that supported him under the tremendous strain of the retreat from Mons; the instinct for a military situation which led him to propose the transfer of the British Army from the Aisne to Flanders, a transfer that only just succeeded in defeating the lunge at Calais; the calculated daring that made him, when he arrived in Flanders, take the risk so brilliantly justified of spreading out his line to a perilous tenuity; the unfailing cheerfulness of one who, dismissing fears of the future or regrets for the past, lives deliberately in the possibilities of the present, the untiring body and the constant, bull-dog purpose. Doubtless, he makes mistakes. There is an impression that he sometimes demands impossible things of his generals, as in the case of General Smith-Dorrien before Ypres; but the time has not come for a verdict upon these criticisms.

The sense of loyalty which I have emphasised as one of the conspicuous traits of Sir John French's character is not confined to the professional sphere. His loyalty

as a soldier has its counterpart in his loyalty to the civil authority. It is an open secret that had his opinion been followed there would have been short shrift with the potential rebels of the Curragh Camp. The final announcement that the soldier whose fine instinct of loyalty to constituted authority was the one redeeming feature of that unhappy business had found it impossible to reconcile honour with the withdrawal of his resignation seemed to leave the country face to face with an unprecedented danger. Only Mr. Asquith's dramatic assumption at that moment of the Secretaryship of War saved the situation.

That episode seemed like the unworthy eclipse of a distinguished career. In fact, it was only the end of his apprenticeship. Five months later Sir John French was saving the liberties of Europe by a retreat that has few parallels in the history of war. When it was known that he was to command the Expeditionary Force there was no dissentient left in all the land. He was the obvious choice, and events have justified it. He has his defects, of course, the chief of which is a certain temperamental indolence. But his merits are great and, without any picturesque qualities, he has the supreme quality of always being adequate to the occasion. In this war he has been subjected to a test infinitely more severe and more searching than anything in the past. It would be strange if he had survived it without severe criticism in many directions. But at the end of all criticisms it is admitted by those whose knowledge is most intimate and whose judgment is best worth having that the question " Is there a better man ? " can only be answered in the negative.

SIR IAN HAMILTON

It would not be easy to find a more striking contrast to Sir John French in externals than that furnished by the general who has been given the command of the Dardanelles expedition. Sir John French does not touch the imagination with any sense of romance. He is, like General Joffre, an entirely prosaic and matter-of-fact figure whose high merit is the possession of common qualities in an uncommon degree and in that equilibrium which, if not genius, is in practical affairs often better than genius. He represents the business of war. Sir Ian Hamilton, on the other hand, suggests the romance of war. In temperament and appearance he is the cavalier, and a very little effort of the imagination is needed to picture him fighting a forlorn battle for the helpless Stuart cause. He is without the tragic seriousness of Montrose, and without that depth and intensity that give Montrose so enduring a hold on the imagination; but it is the spirit of Montrose that he recalls in his mingling of the poet and the adventurer, and the distrust of him in service circles proceeds from the pedestrian fear that a man who looks so much like an embodiment of romance cannot at the same time possess the humdrum qualities of the organiser of victory.

The suspicion is natural. The plain man disapproves of wit in his politicians and of poetry in his soldiers. He likes his men of affairs to talk in monosyllables and to preserve a dour and inflexible seriousness. Wellington was trusted all the more because he was so curt and said "Damn" with such vehemence, and the prestige of Joffre and Kitchener to-day is largely a tribute to their incomparable gift of silence. Now Sir Ian Hamilton has not only committed the fatal error of publishing poetry, but he carries in every lineament the impress of

the poet and of the man of romantic ancestry and taste. He is the painter's soldier, and with his tall spare figure, his mobile, aristocratic features and dark eye gives the impression that his main function in life is to adorn the walls of the Royal Academy and then to die an heroic death on behalf of some mistaken loyalty, and with a cavalier jest upon his lips. And there is certainly no doubt that the natural instinct of the man is a chivalrous intrepidity rather than a calculating caution. The withered hand and wrist serve as a reminder of this, for they are a souvenir of that memorable day thirty years ago when the young lieutenant of the 92nd Highlanders shared in the disaster on Majuba Hill, and when he gave the first conspicuous expression of the stuff that was in him.

It was not the first occasion on which he had been under fire, for he had served in the Afghan War of 1878-80 and had taken part in the operation at Cabul in 1879. But it was the first occasion that discovered the spirit of the young Highlander. The day was going badly for the English and only desperate remedies could save it. In the duel of marksmanship the Boer farmers were easily superior, and Ian Hamilton, with the Highlander's passion for the charge surging in his veins, saw that the one hope was the bayonet. With the courage born of a vision denied to the unhappy commander, Hamilton approached Sir George Colley. "Forgive my presumption, sir," he said, "but will you let the Gordon Highlanders charge with the bayonet?" "No presumption, young gentleman," replied Colley. "We'll let them charge us: then we'll give them a volley and charge." It is not difficult to conceive the feelings with which Ian Hamilton returned to his men, and witnessed the disaster which might have been averted by intrepidity and courage.

But his charge was to come nevertheless. Nearly twenty years had elapsed and once more the British were facing the Boers on a hill not far from the scene of the earlier exploit. It was January 6th, 1900, and on that day the fate of Ladysmith and of the British Army besieged there hung in the balance. It is charged against Hamilton that the peril that threatened from Waggon Hill had not been sufficiently guarded against. However that may be, in the darkness of that January morning the Boers stole up the sides of Waggon Hill, and on the crest of that hill, amid a thunderstorm of unusual intensity, there was waged a battle not less pregnant with results than that of Majuba, for had it been lost South Africa itself could hardly have been saved. Across the plateau the armies faced each other, firing at point-blank range, and often obscured by the torrential rain. As at Majuba the Boers had the advantage with the rifle, but on this occasion they had to deal with the young lieutenant, a lieutenant no longer, but a general with the power to put his faith in the bayonet into practice. For long the battle was in doubt, but then came the moment for which Ian Hamilton had waited, and the charge of the Devons swept the Boers from the hill and saved Ladysmith and its army. And though it was not the 92nd who had given him his revenge, there was to come a day later in that war when at Doornkop his favourite Gordons heard his order to charge, and passing amid a rain of bullets across the open veldt stormed with fixed bayonets the further slope, carried the position, and won as proud a victory as any in all their famous history. And that night, when the stars came out and the camp fires twinkled on the veldt, Ian Hamilton visited his old comrades of the regiment he was born in and thanked them for the gallantry that would ring through faraway Scotland on the following day.

But though he has the Highlander's love of the charge, it would be a mistake to regard him simply as a brilliant adventurer of the battlefield. He is that, but he is more than that. When Lord Roberts, not long before his death, was asked whom among the generals of the British Army he regarded as the ablest commander in the field, he replied, "Ian Hamilton." The judgment was disputable, but not indefensible, and it was founded not on Hamilton's audacity, but on his knowledge and on his coolness in directing the complex movements of the battlefield. He has, like General French, been a serious student of war all his life. He comes of a soldier strain, for his father once commanded the 92nd Highlanders and an ancestor of his was aide-de-camp to the great Marlborough, and his natural aptitude for war has been cultivated not merely by experience in the field, but by familiarity with continental methods. As a youth he went to Germany and from the old Hanoverian, General Dammers, acquired the strategy that had made the Prussians the military masters of Europe. And since then he has learned to apply and qualify that science by the actual experience of war in many fields—in India, in Egypt, in South Africa.

He has not the imperturbable quality of Sir John French, for his temperament is that of the artist, and he once confessed, half jestingly but with a certain seriousness, that he had "never gone into battle without being in a blue funk and wondering how on earth he was to get through." But that element of nervous tension is often the most dangerous in action. It means intellectual speed and passion, and when that motion is controlled by a cool head we have the elements of a great general. The operations in Gallipoli are as formidable as any that a military commander has ever had to face. They call for daring, for swift

inspiration, but they call also for caution and calm judgment. On the first gate of Busyrane there was inscribed the words "Be bold;" on the second, "Be bold and ever more be bold;" on the third, "Be not too bold." They are the invisible inscriptions on the gates of the Dardanelles. Time will show whether Sir Ian Hamilton has the vision to see them and understand their mingled warning and challenge.

SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON

One other type of British generalship calls for remark. In many respects the most significant figure in the British Army to-day is General Sir William Robertson. He is a man of whom the public hears little, but for sheer intellectual force he has perhaps no rival. The measure of his capacity may be understood from the fact that he is a "ranker." It is long since Gladstone abolished purchase in the army; but the abolition of purchase did not mean the democratising of the commands. It only meant that it was possible for a man of brains to secure a commission when it was too late for his talents to win a field for their exercise. The officering of the British Army was still an aristocratic prerogative, safeguarded by the conditions of the service. General Robertson, it is true, is not the first "ranker" to attain the rank of general. Hector Macdonald was also a "ranker," but the qualities that brought that tragic hero to greatness were the qualities of the fighting man. The remarkable fact about General Robertson is that he has won his way to distinction by the qualities of his mind. He has brought into the Army the rare element of abstract thinking—that learning of which we in the past have had too little and the Germans apparently too much.

That he is a gallant soldier goes without saying, for although born in Lincolnshire, he comes of that fighting stock, the Clan Chattan, memorable to every reader of Scott. And he has seen active service in India and in South Africa and was wounded in Chitral. But it is in the lecture room and the study and not in the field that the man who enlisted in the 16th Lancers nearly forty years ago has won his unique distinction. He discovered a genius for languages, including Indian dialects, and this paved his way to notice. And once he had got his foot on the ladder his progress was irresistible, for he revealed an understanding of the science of war that impressed all who came in contact with him, and his ultimate appointment as Commandant of the Staff College at Camberley gave the Army the rare experience of an incomparable lecturer. To-day there is no officer in the British Army who is listened to in the lecture room with such respect as the former private of the 16th Lancers. As Chief of the Staff to Sir John French he is in his true place as the scientific adviser and thinker of the campaign—a plain, unassuming soldier, sparing of words, direct of eye, his Scotch caution touched with kindliness, his whole manner that of one in whom truth of vision is allied to vigour of understanding.

SIR JOHN JELLICOE

When describing the birth of the all-big-gun ship and the opposition it had to meet, Sir John Fisher used to say: "I took care that my committee of experts who had to give their judgment on the idea should not consist of men whose day was done, but of the young men who had the rope round their neck, of the men who would have to walk the plank themselves for every mistake they made."

Among those men he did not fail to include Captain Jellicoe, for not the least conspicuous quality of the First Sea Lord is his power of personal valuation. The all-embracing glance of that full, small-pupilled eye, at once so ruthless and so genial, picks men out with a swift decisiveness from which there is no appeal. In this man he discerns strength; in that man, weakness. He takes the one—for the other he has no use, though his coat of arms have half the quarterings of Debrett. It is not only the revolution he worked in the material, the disposition, the equipment, the strategy of the Navy that is Lord Fisher's claim to distinction; hardly less important was his influence on the personnel of the service. He modernised the ship, but he also modernised the officer. He found the Navy in the grip of a hoary tradition; he brought it under the inspiration of an alert and living intelligence.

And among the instruments of his aims, no one had been more trusted or more prominent than the Admiral who is charged with the most momentous task that has fallen to the lot of any sailor in our annals. It is a quarter of a century since Captain Fisher's roving eye

In Bellicoe

picked him out. Lord Ripon had discovered Fisher four or five years before, and had made him Director of Ordnance, and it was with Captain Jellicoe as his assistant in this department that the association began of the two great seamen whom history will link together as it links St. Vincent and Nelson—for it was St. Vincent's reforms that made Trafalgar possible.

But it required no exceptional gifts of intuition to discover Jellicoe. There is that about this small alert man, with the clear, frank eye, the tight-lipped mouth that falls away in lines which seem equally ready to harden with decision or soften with good humour, that commands attention. His face, in Stevenson's phrase, is a certificate. It suggests a spacious, mobile understanding, breadth of judgment, and large reserves of patience, good humour, confidence. He is not formidable with the thunderous gloom of Lord Kitchener or the sardonic lightnings of Lord Fisher. There is about him much more of the quality of Sir John French, the quality of the plain man, human and friendly in his attitude to the world, but with his emotions under the control of a firm will; wholly free from vanity or eccentricity, seeing things with a large simplicity and comprehension, governed not by temperamental moods or inspirations that may be false, but by the calculations of an acute, dispassionate, singularly serene mind. He carries with him what one may call the candour of the sea, that feeling of a certain elemental directness and veracity common to men who spend their lives far from towns, under a wide sky and in companionship with the great natural forces that do not lie and that cannot be deceived.

Here, you feel, is one who has cleared his mind of illusions, who gives you the truth and demands the truth. He will have no pleasant falsities. "Things

and actions," he seems to say with another famous man, "are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be. Why, therefore, should we desire to be deceived?"

This foundation note of veracity is illustrated by an incident which occurred during the ill-fated expedition of Admiral Seymour, which went at the urgent summons of Sir Claude MacDonald to relieve Peking at the time of the Boxer riots in 1900. In that expedition, which, though it represented eight nations, only consisted of a little more than 2000 men, Captain Jellicoe, the Admiral's Flag Captain, acted as Chief of Staff, and at the battle of Peitsang he was wounded so dangerously that the doctor of the flagship despaired of his life. While he lay in this condition, he sent for a fellow officer, who has told in the *Pall Mall Gazette* what followed:

"I went down immediately, and found him suffering severe pain from his wound, pain made the worse by the utter misery of the surroundings and by the uncertainty of everything. He wanted to know what I thought of things. Foolishly, perhaps, I tried to make the best of them, and told him that I thought we were doing very well, and that there was no doubt at all of our ability to cut our way back to Tientsin or even to the coast, supposing the foreign settlement to have fallen. I do not think I shall ever forget the contemptuous flash of the eyes he turned on me, or the impatient remark: 'Tell me the truth; don't lie!'"

This passion for the naked truth is not merely the instinct of a fundamentally honest man. It is not uncommon to find a flawless veracity associated with extreme dulness and a fatal bigotry. But Admiral Jellicoe's respect for truth is intellectual as well as moral. It is an expression of those rare mental gifts which have made him a marked man in the Navy from the time when, as a cadet, he came out of the *Britannia* the first of his year by an unusual percentage of marks and the winner of all the prizes. This preliminary evidence of

his gifts of mind was sustained at every subsequent test — by taking three first-class certificates in his examination for sub-lieutenant, and by winning the prize of £80 for gunnery at the Royal Naval College.

The last-mentioned achievement was prophetic. In the great scheme of modernising the Navy, which Lord Fisher completed so opportunely, it will be said that the most important phases were the changes in disposition, in strategy, and in construction. And yet, truly seen, it might be said that these things were but means to an end. Ships, after all, are only gun carriages. It is the gun and its use for which everything else is a preparation. And it is the revolution in guns and gunnery that is the key of the supremacy that means so much to us to-day.

In that revolution three men have been primarily concerned. Lord Fisher, with that instinct for the centre of things which never fails him, began his career by writing on gunnery. Sir Percy Scott made the all-big-gun ship possible by his invention of the central fire control system. Sir John Jellicoe completed the triumvirate. He was Director of Naval Ordnance at the critical moment. He was already known as one of the greatest gunnery experts in the Navy owing to his achievements while in command of the *Drake*, and Sir John Fisher brought him to the Ordnance Department when his plans were ripe for the great transition to the Dreadnought era. It was the sympathy, understanding, and enthusiasm which Captain Jellicoe gave to Sir Percy Scott that made the work of that original and inventive mind effective.

Nor did he give sympathy and enthusiasm only. He brought to the task original thought and an activity of mind that worked an unparalleled reform in the gunnery equipment and efficiency of the Navy. Within a year

of his appointment as Director of Ordnance, he had raised the percentage of hits out of rounds fired from 42 to over 70. In other words, he had increased by more than a third the fighting value of the British Navy, and that without a keel being added to its composition.

It is a favourite, half-jocular, half-serious, saying of Lord Fisher's, as he points to this or that fact that has worked to the advantage of this country: "Didn't I say that we are the Lost Tribes of the chosen people?" One can imagine him pointing to Admiral Jellicoe as a proof of his theory. For if any one might claim to have been preserved by an invisible hand for great ends, it is the Admiral who, perhaps more than any other single man, has the destiny of the world in his keeping to-day.

Thrice he has escaped death when death seemed to have him fast—in China, as I have indicated; off Gibraltar, in 1886, when he commanded a gig, manned by volunteers, that went to the rescue of the crew of a steamer stranded on a sandbank, and when the gig capsized in the heavy seas and he was washed ashore; most conspicuously in the Mediterranean, in 1893, on the day when Sir George Tryon sent his flagship *Victoria* to its doom. Jellicoe was the commander of the flagship.

It is not necessary here to recall the facts of that terrible disaster. Tryon's mistake is for ever inexplicable. What we know is that Captain Bourke did his utmost to counter the Admiral's fatal order. Had the commander been present to reinforce his objections, perhaps the calamity would have been avoided.

But the commander was not present. "He, poor fellow, was below and in bed from fever," said Admiral Sir G. Phipps Hornby, in his article on the disaster in the *Fortnightly*. "He was called to get up before the ship sank. He got up; but, instead of going up to save himself, he went below to hurry up any one who

might be there. When the ship foundered, he came to the surface necessarily in a state of exhaustion. Fortunately, a midshipman helped and supported him."

That midshipman certainly deserves a memorable place among the instruments of fate. For it is doubtful whether any life more necessary, not to this country only, but to the world, was ever snatched from the jaws of death. How necessary we only fully understood twenty-one years later, in the tremendous hour when the nation realised that the Fleet alone stood between it and annihilation.

It would be unjust to suggest that there was no other admiral adequate to the task, but it is just and true to say that there was no other admiral so indisputably and variously equipped for the task. Sir A. K. Wilson is doubtless a more profound strategist, a greater abstract thinker. But he had passed out of the active service, and, moreover, he had nothing of the versatility of the younger man. He hated the administrative side of the service, and would suggest, with the exquisite modesty that made him so delightful, that this or that department had never had a more incompetent head than he had been.

Now Sir John Jellicoe has that rapid and adaptable type of mind that is at home in all tasks, that is at once comprehensive and minute, happy in thought and in action, at the desk or on the quarter-deck. Doubtless he had special aptitude for the sea, due to the tradition of a sea-going family. For not only is he the son of a sailor, his father, Captain John H. Jellicoe, having been for many years Commodore of the fleet of the R.M.S.P.; but another of his kin was that Admiral Philip Patton who was Second Sea Lord at the time of Trafalgar. But you feel that so vigorous and agile an intellect would have achieved success in any calling, and that it is only

an accident that made him a great seaman instead of a great engineer or a brilliant lawyer. He had run through the whole gamut of the Navy with a swift apprehension of the parts and the whole, and at fifty-five embodied more than any one, except his chief, the spirit, practice, and thought of the modern navy.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact. The modern navy is the most gigantic speculation in history. All the axioms of the past have been reversed or vitiated. Steam and steel, guns and explosives, torpedoes and submarines, mines and aeroplanes, have changed the whole character of the problems of sea warfare. Its theories are based not upon experience, but upon thought; so much so that even at this moment no man can say whether the little submarine has not made the great modern battleship as obsolete as Nelson's *Victory*.

In these circumstances, the supreme need at the helm was a mind wedded to no antiquated assumptions, familiar with all the incalculable factors, quick to seize the meaning of every fact and to correlate it with the strategic and tactical requirements—in short, a mind, mobile, modern, unprejudiced, which faced the unknown with the keenest vision, the most instructed judgment, and the readiest accessibility to ideas. In all this Sir John Jellicoe was without a rival.

In the mind of one masterful man he had for years been marked out as Admiralissimo when the time came, and the way that masterful mind cleared the obstacles from the path of this man of genius but small social influence will one day make a fascinating page in the history of the Navy and of the war.

The conclusive proof of his fitness for the immense burden imposed upon him came, fortunately, on the eve of the struggle. He commanded the Red Fleet

during the manœuvres of 1913. They were carried out in strict secrecy, but it is known in service circles that the result was something much more than a victory for Admiral Jellicoe.

It was a victory not merely brilliant, but charged with a significance that can only be described as startling. When it was over, it left this man of the pleasant, alert manner, the clear, terse speech, and the direct yet kindly eye, the indisputable choice when the day came that was to bring all the speculations of Whitehall to the test of battle.

In that ordeal many doctrines will be found to be effete, many calculations will prove unsound, many truths will turn out to be falsities. But there are two certainties that will survive all tests—the gallantry of the men and the genius of their commander.

KARL LIEBKNECHT

AND THE GERMAN DEMOCRACY

THERE have been many iron crosses distributed in Germany since August last. They have doubtless been given to brave men for brave deeds. But the bravest man in Germany has had no iron cross, and if he has escaped the martyr's cross it is only because the government dare not risk the consequences. For Karl Liebknecht might be even more dangerous dead than alive. The news of his execution or even of his imprisonment would be as disastrous to the Kaiser as the loss of a pitched battle. It would send through the trenches a chill reminder of that other war that is temporarily suspended—the war for the liberties of the Prussian people.

For there are two kings in Potsdam. There is the Kaiser who reviews his legions on the parade ground before the Old Palace and there is Karl Liebknecht who gathers his legions in the streets. His election to the Reichstag as the Socialist representative of the Kaiser's own borough in 1912 was the most bitter insult the Kaiser ever received from his people. It was as though Windsor had returned a Republican to Parliament. The Kaiser's sons ostentatiously led the way to the polling booth in the early morning, but at night the people of Potsdam had elected old Wilhelm Liebknecht's son as their democratic king.

There has been much scornful criticism of the docility with which the German Socialists have answered the

call of the Prussian drill sergeant. See what nonsense this Socialism is, it is said. See how it all vanishes into thin air at the sound of the trumpet. And see what an admirable institution is that Prussian drill sergeant. Oh, for a drill sergeant like him in England, a drill sergeant who at the word of command can bring the whole working class to heel and make them the obedient instruments of a triumphant aristocracy. "Yes," said Carlyle long ago, "the idea of a pig-headed soldier who will obey orders and fire on his own father at the command of an officer is a great comfort to the aristocratic mind."

And it must be admitted that there is ground for this comfortable conviction of the value of militarism as a strait-waistcoat for an insurgent democracy. The obedience with which the German Socialists, after marching for generations to the polls against the Prussian junkers and their military machine, fell into step behind the junkers at the call of the bugle seems to reduce all their agitations and theories to idle wind. It encourages writers like the enigmatic Dr. Dillon to say, as he says in the *Contemporary Review*, that there is nothing to choose between the government and the people. But that is to take a shallow view of the facts. The storm fell upon the Socialists of Germany as suddenly as upon us. They knew less of the causes of that storm than we knew. They saw only one thing, as we did, that their country was in danger; and they resolved, as we did, to subordinate everything to the instant duty of saving it from ruin.

We can illustrate the position with a parable. You may quarrel very heartily with your family about the internal economy of your house; but if the house is in flames you will pretermit those quarrels and join forces to put out the flames. You may suspect that the fire

is due to the mischievous stove arrangements against which you have waged a vain struggle; but that will not make you less eager to quench the fire. When it is quenched you will have no more nonsense about that stove; but for the moment you are in another realm of ideas and on another plane of action.

The isolation of Karl Liebknecht, therefore, is more apparent than real. Millions of people in Germany are thinking his thoughts, and though he alone is uttering them to-day, they will be the governing thoughts of Germany to-morrow. The fact that he is free to utter them is in itself a portent. It is the most decisive evidence of the power of that other *motif* that runs through the German nation counter to the triumphant *motif* of Bernhardism just as in the great imagery of *Tannhäuser* the Pilgrims' Chorus runs counter to the sensuous flood of the Venusberg music. We have forgotten that other *motif*. We see Germany only by the torch of Bernhardi. It could not be otherwise. In the fierce stress of battle we have no time to discriminate, and we brand the whole German nation with the scarlet letter. We know it is false; we know that Burke's great saying about the indictment of a nation is as true of Germany as of any other people; but for the moment we are living under the dominion of a tyrannic passion which repudiates the reason almost as though it were a traitor. I confess that, with every desire to be sensible, I am a little unhappy when I find that the barber or the waiter into whose hands I may have fallen addresses me in the accents of Germany. I know the poor wretch is as innocent of this great crime as I am, I know that his life in these days must be a hell—and yet . . . well, I wish I had fallen into other hands. And so with the music of Germany. Even that intimate speech of Schumann—the most brotherly and tender language in

all the realm of art—seems like the speech of one with whom there is a tragic estrangement.

But the other *motif* will return and even through the discords of war we may hear it like an undertone. The "Eye Witness" tells us of the German officer who, even in captivity, preserves his insolent bearing. He is the symbol of the Germany we are fighting, and that we are going to beat. But Liebknecht is the symbol of the Germany with whom we are going to be reconciled. He stands there, the bravest man in Europe at this moment, challenging and resisting the whole current of the war. And, as I have said, the significant thing is that he is still free. It was different in 1870 when his father, Wilhelm Liebknecht, one of the founders of German Social Democracy, was clapped in prison together with Bebel for resisting in the Reichstag the proposal to annex Alsace-Lorraine. Karl has gone much further than his father went. It was he who, when the German Press was fanning the flame of hatred against the Belgians by stories of atrocities committed against the German soldiers, hunted the stories to their source in hospitals and elsewhere, proved them to be baseless and denounced them as such in *Vorwaerts*.

But it is in his resistance to the war itself that Dr. Liebknecht has revealed his true mettle. While those of his fellow Socialists who opposed the war walked out of the Reichstag when the war credits were voted on December 2, he remained to utter his protest. The President would not allow him to speak, and when he handed in his speech in writing the President refused to insert it in the records. But the speech remains and reading it we cannot wonder that the Kaiser dare not let his people see it. For it denounces the war as having been "prepared by the German and Austrian war parties, acting together in the darkness of half-

absolutism and secret diplomacy, with the intention of getting ahead of their adversaries." The cry against "Tsarism" was an imposture. "Germany, the partner of Tsarism, the most conspicuous example of political reaction, has no mission as a liberator of nations. The liberation of the Russian and German people must be the work of themselves." His conclusion will stand as one of the most famous indictments in history.

"Under protest against the war; against those who are responsible for it and have caused it; against the capitalistic purposes for which it is being waged; against the plans of annexation; against the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg; against the absolute reign of the rights of war; against the social and political violation of their clear duty of which the Government and the ruling classes stand guilty, I shall vote against the war credits asked for."

No less remarkable was his speech in the Prussian Diet in March, when the bureaucracy revealed "the naked truth that in Prussia everything remains as before." The war had opened with the promise that the infamous property suffrage in Prussia should be abolished; but with the soldiers securely in the trenches the oligarchy had repudiated the promise. The people were to die, but they were to have no reward. They were to liberate the Russians from Tsarism, but they were to remain political slaves themselves—slaves to the trinity of Militarism, Monarchy, and Property. This time Liebknecht was permitted to speak, but the Diet fled at his rising. They dared not stay to hear him tell how "our soldiers will clench their fists in the trenches" as they hear of their betrayal.

The magnitude of that betrayal can hardly be exaggerated. Prussia is a despotism. The three-class suffrage so effectually excludes the people from representation that in the whole Diet there are only seven Socialists. Add to this the fact that the government is responsible

not to Parliament but to the Kaiser and it will be seen how completely divorced the people are from the affairs of Government. And yet our Dr. Dillons tell us there is nothing to choose between the people and the tyranny which enslaves them.

If this were true we might indeed despair. But it is not true. *Vorwaerts* knew it was not true when it courageously declared—for it had already been several times suppressed—that "democratic control by the people would have prevented the war." It is the crowned King of Potsdam, not the uncrowned King of Potsdam with whom we are at death grips, and until we appreciate that fact we shall not understand what this war is really about. It is not a war between this country and that, this people and that, this race and that, but between this ideal and that—between the ideal of despotism and the ideal of freedom—between absolutism and democracy, between imperialism and national liberty. The parties to the quarrel have got so curiously mixed that this truth is a little difficult to see and sometimes even a little hard to believe. But it is the truth all the same, and in that truth is the one gleam of hope in the vast tragedy.

We cannot surrender that hope of an ultimate reconciliation of the democracies, for without it human life on this planet would be poisoned for ever. It is true that at this moment, when we are under the shadow of that enormous crime of the *Lusitania*, it is difficult to imagine that we can ever again be on terms with the German people. And if that crime were their crime we could not be. But it is the crime of a system, not of a people. Even on the battlefield and at sea there have been glimpses that the men are better than the devilish doctrine that employs them as its instruments. Has there been anything in the history of war more moving

than those scenes in the trenches on Christmas Day? And the course of the struggle has been full of incidents of a similar kind, often trivial but often eloquent of the mutual goodwill that cannot be entirely stifled even by the sulphurous atmosphere of war. The English people have been quickly responsive to such episodes, as in the case of Captain von Müller of the *Emden*. The reason is simple. There is no atmosphere so intolerable, so desolating as that of hate. The healthy mind hates in spasms, but it lives by its affections. The man who is consumed by hate is not only a misery to himself, but a source of misery to all around him, not because of the menace he offers to our interests but because he defiles the atmosphere we breathe and debases the currency of our kind. We would give anything to see one spark of gladness leap from his thundercloud. And it is because Captain von Müller is a spark of gladness from the thundercloud of Germany that we made much of him. He has fought without hate and without bitterness, with chivalry and good temper, and he has shown that it is possible still to be both a brave man and a gentleman.

Now there is a conviction in some minds, and nowhere more than in intellectual Germany, that in order to defeat your foe you must first hate him. I do not know whether the Kaiser's order about destroying "the contemptible little army" was authentic. It has been repeatedly denied and may be an invention. But there is no doubt about the stream of vitriol that flows from high places in Germany apparently to put fire into the hearts of the soldiers. The crude and vulgar appeal of the Crown Prince of Bavaria to his men is an example, and so also is the speech of Professor Sombart in which he has explained how profound, eternal, and universal is the hatred of the German for England and the English.

It burns, he says, in the whole German people from the taxi-driver to the prince. It is spontaneous, elemental, rooted in the deepest depths of the German being—with much more frenzied nonsense of the same sort.

In his sane moments he probably knows that there are no such things as eternal hatreds between nations, or hatreds rooted in elemental antagonisms. The conflicts between peoples proceed from conflicts between kings and chancelleries. Kant in his *Perpetual Peace* said that that ideal could never be attained until the world had got rid of thrones and was organised on a democratic basis. And, though the dynastic war belongs to the past, the truth of that maxim is as unassailable to-day as when Kant uttered it.

We have but to contrast the Republican United States with Germany, or the Republican France to-day with the France of the Second Empire to understand that it is not democracies who cherish eternal hates that flame into war, but ambitious rulers and incompetent ministers who blunder into war for their own schemes. Napoleon III. was hardly less criminally wrong than Bismarck in 1870 or than the Kaiser is to-day.

We are asked to believe that there is an eternal feud between Slav and Teuton, yet we all know that the conflict between Russia and Germany is a diplomatic conflict, and that if the lifelong policy of Bismarck had not been repudiated there would have been no collision with Russia. We ourselves have passed through the whole gamut of European alliances. We have fought against France and with France, against Russia and with Russia, against Prussia and with Prussia, against Spain and with Spain, against the Turk and with the Turk. What had undying national hates or loves to do with these things? They were transient political creations, not imperishable racial tendencies. Hate is a personal

thing and that is why there can be no enduring peace in a world which is subject to personal rule. Nations are not antagonistic but complementary. That is why Free Trade is a spiritual influence as well as an economic theory. It is a material expression of the religion of humanity.

It is significant that these appeals to hate usually come from bookish persons, and especially from the professors who are so largely responsible for the philosophy that has driven Germany to madness. Whenever we come down to the authentic word of the soldier himself we find that it breathes none of the ferocity that issues from the professor who sees war only in the abstract and nations as pawns on his philosophical chessboard. The private soldier is merciless in battle. "I stuck a German through the body and shot a lot more," says a private of the London Scottish, writing to his parents about the famous charge. But he was only doing his duty. In normal conditions he would probably walk round a worm rather than tread on it, but now he has surrendered his conscience to his country, and does the task imposed on him without flinching, though that task in other circumstances would be called murder.

The point, however, is that he does his slaying without hate. Indeed, how should he hate? He lies with his fellows in the trench all day, waiting to shoot men who are lying in a trench a hundred yards away, and who are waiting to shoot him. He has never seen them before. He does not know their names or speak their language. All that he knows is that it is his business to kill them, just as it is their business to kill him. He is sorry for himself, and perhaps a little sorry for them, but duty is duty, and he does it. And if he charges he charges with the passion of victory, but not

with the motive of hate. He no more hates the man he runs through than he hates the man from whom he takes the ball on the football field.

This gospel of hate as the instrument of victory in battle, indeed, is not the soldier's gospel at all, but the scholar's gospel and not seldom the gospel of the cleric. Perhaps it is hardly fair to quote General Lee as typical of the soldier, for he was not only one of the greatest generals but also one of the most saintly men who ever lived. But he represented the soldier's spirit, and his comments on hatred in war are true to the profession he adorned. When a minister in the course of his sermon had expressed himself rather bitterly as to the conduct of the North, Lee said to him, "Doctor, there is a good old book which says 'Love your enemies.' . . . Do you think that your remarks this evening were quite in the spirit of that teaching?" On another occasion when one of his generals exclaimed of the enemy, "I wish these people were all dead," Lee answered, "How can you say so? Now I wish they were all at home attending to their own business and leaving us to do the same." And he stated his feeling generally when he said, "I have fought against the people of the North, because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the South dearest rights. But I have never cherished bitter or vindictive feelings and have never seen the day when I did not pray for them."

That is the spirit of the great general and it is the spirit of Carlyle's peasant of Dumdrudge. We may be sure that it is the spirit that pervades the battle that is raging so near to us day and night as we go about our business. And perhaps hardly less on the German side than our own. It was a German officer who wrote the most impressive protest that has appeared against the gospel of hate that is preached by professors and editors

for the encouragement of soldiers. The letter which appeared in the *Cologne Gazette* deserves to be remembered in the history of the war for its note of dignity and sadness.

"Perhaps you will be so good as to assist, by the publication of these lines, in freeing our troops from an evil which they feel very strongly. I have on many occasions, when distributing among the men the postal packets, observed among them postcards on which the defeated French, English, and Russians were derided in a tasteless fashion.

"The impression made by these postcards on our men is highly noteworthy. Scarcely anybody is pleased with these postcards; on the contrary, every one expresses his displeasure.

"This is quite natural when one considers the position. We know how victories are won. We also know by what tremendous sacrifices they are obtained. We see with our own eyes the unspeakable misery of the battlefield. We rejoice over our victories, but our joy is damped by the recollection of the sad pictures which we observe almost daily.

"And our enemies have, in an overwhelming majority of cases, truly not deserved to be derided in such a way. Had they not fought so bravely we would not have had to register such losses.

"Insipid, therefore, as these postcards are in themselves, their effect here, on the battlefields, in face of our dead and wounded, is only calculated to cause disgust. Such postcards are as much out of place in the battlefield as a clown is at a funeral. Perhaps these lines may prove instrumental in decreasing the number of such postcards sent to our troops."

That is not the spirit of hate; it is the spirit of true humanity. I think we should all like to feel that it reflects the soul of Germany and that the infamies that have made the blood of the world run cold are not the infamies of a people, but of a system. In any case we shall not answer infamy with infamy. "It makes one angry," said a distinguished clergyman to me, "to hear Churchill talking of fighting this war like gentlemen. How can we fight such a foe in a gentlemanly way?" The primeval instinct of revenge is strong in all of us. We cannot read the story of Louvain, of Aerschot, of

Roulers, of Senlis, of Dinant without feeling it boil within us. We want an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. We want to see their towns in ruins and their people driven into beggary as they have driven the Belgians. We feel that crimes like theirs can only be wiped out by crimes as vast, that suffering such as they have inflicted can only be paid in suffering.

And yet, if this struggle has one meaning more profound than any other it is this, that we are waging a war of civilisation against barbarism—a barbarism which is only more hateful because, in M. Cambon's phrase, it is " pedantic barbarism." Germany's crime is not to be measured by the visible wrong. It is a crime against the soul of the world. She has shamed humanity. She has outraged the sanctities which are the common heritage of all of us and has made the civilisation that men have won from the ages a hideous jest. We have to repair that wrong and to reaffirm the reign of law among men. But we shall not do it with the methods of barbarism against which we war. The punishment that is inflicted shall be adequate to the enormity of the crime, but it shall be the punishment of justice and not of revenge or hate.

The best hope of the recovery of the world from the wounds of this war is in the deliverance of the German people from Kaiserism, and that hope can best be measured by the significance of Karl Liebknecht. There are some people who see in him only a negligible figure, the equivalent of those who oppose the war in this country. But that is to ignore the fact that we live under a democratic system and are fighting for the existence of democracy, while Liebknecht lives under a despotism which is fighting for the maintenance and extension of despotism. If it were true that there is nothing to choose in this war between the ideal of this

country and the ideal of Germany, there would be ground for the suggestion that Liebknecht is only a perverse person. But who will say that that is true? Who will say that it means nothing to the world whether Germany or the Allies win? Liebknecht knows that it means everything and he would rather see Germany redeemed by defeat than Kaiserism enthroned over the earth. There are others who say that Liebknecht's opposition is in some subtle way that they do not explain a pawn in the German game. If it were not so, they say, some means would have been found of suppressing him. But those who see in him a tool of the Kaiser know little of the man or of his career, and the fact that he is at liberty is the most conclusive proof of his influence even in the midst of the war.

For if the Government thought they could risk imprisoning him he would have disappeared long ago. It would not be the first time that they had had him under lock and key. He made his reputation as a barrister in 1905 by his defence in the famous Königsberg trial of the German Socialists charged with conspiracy on behalf of the Russian revolutionists and he followed this up with a fierce anti-militarist propaganda. For, like Bebel, he knew that no good would be done with Prussia until the military fetish was destroyed and with the true instinct of the reformer he aimed at the heart of the tyranny. His reward was eighteen months' imprisonment.

But they could not suppress a man like Karl Liebknecht by putting him in prison any more than they could suppress his father in that way. When he came out Berlin celebrated the fact by electing him to the holy of holies of junkerdom, the Diet itself. And since then, and especially since his election at Potsdam to the Reichstag, his power has increased. With the

death of Bebel — brave old Bebel of the merry eye and the impetuous eloquence—he became the foremost figure in the most powerful party in Germany, his opinions uncompromising, his honesty unquestioned, his courage equal to any occasion. He has less spaciousness and imagination than Jaurès, whose death is the greatest personal calamity that has befallen Europe in this war—perhaps less gentleness than dwelt under the kindly exterior of old Wilhelm Liebknecht. But he has a clear and powerful mind, immense force of character, and a gift of scorn. "Have you read Roosevelt's articles on Socialism?" he was asked at the end of an interview when he was on his visit to America in 1910. "My dear sir, I will only discuss opinions worth while discussing," was his reply. It will be seen that he has taken the measure of Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. The courage which enabled him, little more than a year ago, to make in the Reichstag that famous exposure of the corruption practised by Krupps—an exposure which led to the trial and sentence of high officials—has now found a larger field of activity.

The two Kings of Potsdam will emerge from the war in a very different relationship from that of the past. The militarism that sustained the despotic rule of the Kaiser will be discredited and we hope in ruins. Upon its ruins Karl Liebknecht will stand as the most powerful democratic figure in Germany. Under his inspiration and the inspiration of men like him, it may be, his country will be no longer a menace to the world, but a bulwark of Liberalism in Western Europe.

PRESIDENT WILSON

AND THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA

The rupture between President Wilson and Mr. Bryan will be one of the great landmarks of the war. Whatever other significance the event may have, it is conclusive evidence of the failure of German diplomacy in America. The importance of that failure can hardly be exaggerated. Behind the struggle of the armies in the field there has been another struggle, hardly less important, for the sympathy of the neutral world. In this secondary theatre, the high hopes with which the Kaiser started on his great adventure have been disappointed. His main expectation, of course, was that the swift and overwhelming triumph of his arms would stampede the neutral world and bring it to his side, if not through sympathy at least through fear and self-interest. But he did not rely only on the suasion of success. He set in operation also the formidable machinery of the most unscrupulous diplomatic system extant.

What has been the result? There were four main spheres of operation—the Balkans, Italy, Scandinavia, and the United States. In one sphere alone, Turkey and the Balkans, has he succeeded, and he has succeeded there for three reasons: the failure of the Allies to formulate a clear and decisive appeal to the Balkan States, the German influences in the courts, and the susceptibility of so complicated a situation to those corrupt arts which the Wilhelmstrasse has carried to

such perfection. But that is his one success. Scandinavia, in spite of its fears of Russia, has stood firm against the Kaiser's cajoleries and threats; Italy has entered the war on the side of the Allies, and the United States has brought his policy of diplomatic hectoring and bluff to the challenge of a courteous but decisive "No."

The Kaiser has made many miscalculations about nations and about men, but no greater miscalculation than that which he has made in regard to President Wilson and the United States. He is not alone in that. There has been a good deal of ignorance on the same subject in this country. In the early stages of the war there was a mischievous clamour against the United States in a section of the Press which has never quite got rid of the idea that America is only a rather rebellious member of our own household, to be patronised when it does what we want and lectured like a disobedient child when it doesn't. President Wilson was assumed, in these ill-informed quarters, to be a timid, academic person, so different from that magnificent tub-thumper, Mr. Roosevelt, who would have been at war with Mexico in a trice and would, it was believed, have plunged into the European struggle with or without excuse.

If there was misunderstanding here on the subject we cannot be surprised that the Kaiser blundered so badly. He, too, believed in the "schoolmaster" view of Woodrow Wilson. A man who had refused such a golden opportunity of annexing Mexico must be a timid, invertebrate person who had only to be bullied in order to do what he was told. Moreover, was there not that great German-American population to serve as a whip for the Presidential back? One person in every five German born or of German descent, ready to play the

game of the Fatherland, ready to ally himself with the Irish-Americans in order to bring the whole Government of the country to heel or disaster. And so he did not send the polite, the gracious, the supple Prince Bülow to Washington. That courtly gentleman was dispatched to Italy to charm the Italian nation into quiescence. For America he needed another style of diplomacy, and he sent thither the stout and rather stupid Herr Dernberg to let President Wilson and the Americans know that Germany was a very rough customer and would stand no nonsense.

It was a fatal blunder—the blunder of a people who have been so blinded by materialism that they do not seem to have so much as the consciousness that there is such a thing as moral strength on earth. No one who had followed with intelligent understanding the career of Woodrow Wilson could have doubted that he had to deal with a man of iron, a man with a moral passion as fervid as that of his colleague, Mr. Bryan, but with that passion informed by wide knowledge and controlled by a masterful will—a quiet, still man who does not live with his ear to the ground and his eye on the weathercock, who refuses to buy popularity by infinite handshaking and robustious speech, but comes out to action from the sanctuary of his own thoughts, where principle, and not expediency, is his counsellor. Please do not sniff at principle. It is one of those old-fashioned things which is a little out of favour with our pragmatic young men; but the statesman that is without it is as dangerous as the mariner who is without a compass. The peril of the democracy in all countries, and in this as much as any, is that it is so easily fooled by the unscrupulous adventurer whose life is an assertion of the Candidate's Creed—

> " I don't believe in princerple,
> But oh, I du in interest "—

the sort of gentleman who, with a great gift of demagogic speech, lives on the emotions of the crowd and can only be said never to have deserted a principle because he never had a principle to desert.

It is because no man in a conspicuous position in the democratic world to-day is so entirely governed by principle and by moral sanctions that President Wilson is not merely the first citizen of the United States, but the first citizen of the world. Mistakes, no doubt, for he is human, but they have never been the mistakes of a weak man, most certainly they have never been the mistakes of a political gambler or of one who has ever been touched by the sordid motives of ambition. To suppose that such a man, the head of such a country, was to be terrorised by " big talk " was the silliest misreading of his character. Courage, not the courage that gambles on the public emotions, but the courage that takes its stand on moral grounds, has been the capital note of his career. As President of Princeton University he had come into public prominence by his determination to save that great institution from being the monopoly of wealthy idlers. " Dollars or brains " — that was the issue, and he fought for brains. The " dollars " won and he resigned; but the millionaires had a costly victory. They had saved Princeton for the prince of the pork trade, but in the end they found they had made its President the head of the nation.

People, in fact, have always been making the Kaiser's mistake about Woodrow Wilson, always assuming that he was " only a schoolmaster " and could be used or brushed aside as the occasion demanded. And his singular simplicity and lack of ostentation strengthen the illusion, for there is nothing that so mystifies the bully and the rogue as the quality of modesty. He cannot understand that a man may be strong without

always talking about his muscle. It was the famous duel with ex-Senator Smith of New Jersey that revealed Mr. Wilson to the larger world. He had resigned his place at Princeton, and the great party "boss" who was in very bad odour thought it would be a good stroke of business to get back to the Senate under the cover of Woodrow Wilson's unsullied name. He would get him nominated as Governor of New Jersey and later exact his own price. But when the nomination came Mr. Wilson had a preliminary condition. If he was to stand as the Democratic nominee for the Governorship the discredited "boss" must not be associated with him as Democratic candidate for the Senate. Mr. Smith, pulling the strings behind, agreed. He was sure that if he could get Mr. Wilson's consent to save the Democratic cause, he could break the "schoolmaster" to his will when he had got him in harness. There are few more dramatic stories of public life than the events that followed—Smith putting up a man of straw for the Senate; then, Wilson safely elected, revealing his whole battery and demanding the retirement of the man of straw and the Senatorship for himself; Wilson denouncing his candidature and beating him ignominiously out of the field. The years of the Governorship that followed are historic. There had never been such a cleansing fire in State government, and from that apprenticeship Woodrow Wilson emerged with a reputation unlike anything else in America and his election to the Presidency in opposition to Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Taft was a convincing proof of the sound instinct of the American people for the man of character.

As President, his achievements in internal policy have been as remarkable for their magnitude as for their courage and their wisdom. He has been as conspicuous for deeds as President Roosevelt was for words. His

speeches have the brevity of Lincoln, something of that great man's force, still more of the note of Burke. His speech in introducing his measure bringing the United States within sight of his ideal of Free Trade occupied only eight minutes; but the most striking of his utterances was the noble speech in which, defying the popular sentiment, he brought the dispute with this country on the Panama Canal to an end. That speech will live among the supreme expressions of great statesmanship.

Throughout the war his attitude has conformed to the historic tradition of the United States of non-intervention in European affairs. This attitude laid him open to attack from both sides. He was assailed because he did not enter his protest against the atrocities in Belgium, and it is at least arguable that he would have done well to have initiated a neutral court of inquiry. Such a course would not have been a challenge directed formally against Germany only, for allegations on either side would have been investigated, and, whatever the findings, there would have been a sense that the claims of humanity had some authoritative guardianship. But the chief attack on the policy of President Wilson has come from the side of Germany, which has realised that the neutrality of the United States has meant, in fact, that all its resources are at the disposal of the Allies, in virtue of the fact that they have command of the sea. To stop the supply of munitions to this country has been the chief object of the hectoring policy of Germany, which culminated in the crime of the *Lusitania*. President Wilson's line has been unyielding. The trade of America is open to all nations, and it is not his duty to check that trade in one channel because the German navy has failed to keep it open in another. That would not be neutrality: that would be intervention in the interests of Germany.

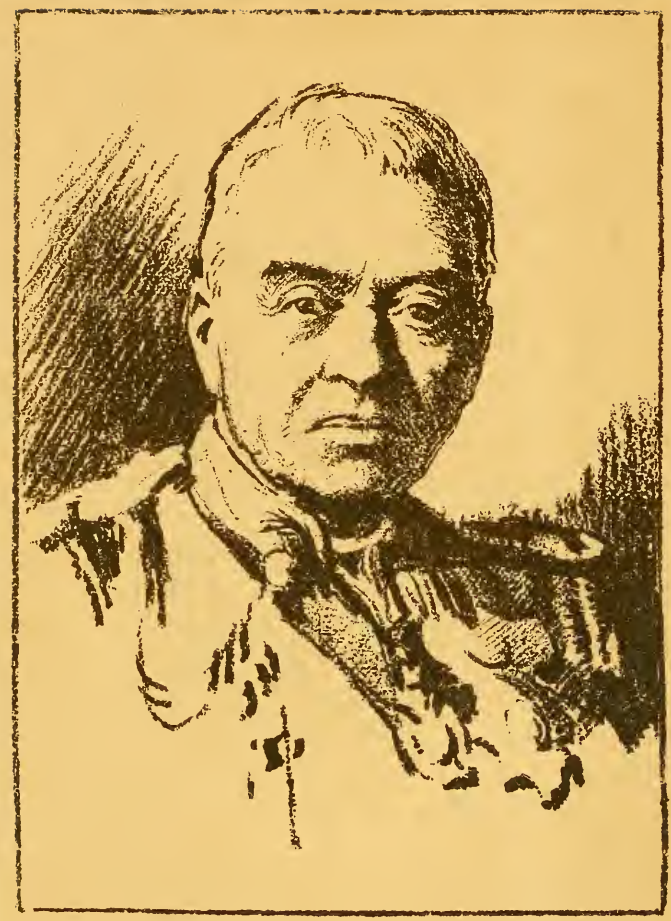
It was on this policy that the breach with Mr. Bryan came. Mr. Bryan is a wonderful son of the plains, primitive, elemental, with a great gift of speech, the religious fervour of a field preacher, a certain *naïveté* that makes him always charming if sometimes a jest, and a passion for the undiluted gospel of non-intervention. That he had been at issue with Mr. Wilson had been long known, but the extraordinary personal authority of the President held him in check. When the hot gospeller of righteousness was beaten by Mr. Wilson as the Democratic nominee he fell under the sway of his more instructed and more masterful rival, who on his election to the Presidency made him his chief Minister. Mr. Bryan, who has the moral passion of John Bright without Bright's intellectual power, bore the restraints of office with difficulty and the chief business of the President was to bring his starry emotions within the orbit of practical politics. He had hitherto succeeded and I have reason to know that the " managing " of Mr. Bryan will make one of the most amusing stories in the by-ways of politics.

Now he has gone out to preach peace on any terms. He demands that the Government shall refuse to allow the American trader to supply munitions of war, in theory, to any one, but, in fact, to the Allies, and also the prohibition of the right of American citizens to sail in British ships. In short, he repudiates his famous declaration on munitions, which he signed but which no doubt the President inspired, and stands for the full acceptance of the German demands. President Wilson will not buy peace on these ignoble conditions. He is as anxious as Mr. Bryan to maintain peace; he is as loyal to the traditions of the fathers of the great Republic; but he realises that the world has changed and that the United States can no longer be hermetically sealed

against the external nations. This war is, ultimately, a war for the Government of the world. If Germany wins, the Kaiser's dream of a universal throne will be accomplished, for every nation, and the United States among the rest, will live under the sanction of the Prussian sword. The Monroe doctrine itself is, by a strange irony, at stake. It was designed—as the converse of the policy of non-intervention in European affairs—to preserve the Americas from European attack. But the victory of Germany would make the Monroe doctrine waste paper. The South American republics would fall to the Kaiser and the United States would no longer be the unchallenged guardian of the peace of the Americas, but would have to face the menace of a German South America. In a word, the fate of the great Republic is in the balance as truly as, though less directly than, the fate of Europe.

It is a mercy for the world, but most a mercy for the United States, that in the struggle for the Democratic nomination the amiable dreamer was defeated by the statesman. What would have happened if Mr. Bryan had won we now see. President Wilson understands what is at stake. He knows that surrender to the German demands would not only be a humiliation to his country beyond all parallel, but that finally it would assuredly mean the end of the American democracy and all the ideals for which it stands. In refusing to yield an inch on the rights of American citizens to work for whom they like and travel how they like he is defending the sacred ark of freedom. He will not go to war if war can be avoided with honour; but the integrity of the United States is his supreme concern and it is safe in his hands. The American people are with him. They have been in sympathy with the Allies from the beginning and every incident of the war, culminating

in the crime of the *Lusitania*, has deepened that sympathy. Now even the German-Americans are alarmed. They see that they have to make their choice—that they cannot be Americans and Germans, that they cannot in the final test have two loyalties. The hyphen must go. And there is abundant evidence that it is going. The victims of the *Lusitania* did not die in vain, and in the end the United States stands with practical unanimity behind the great man whom the Kaiser set out so confidently to browbeat into obedience.



Lord Fisher

LORD FISHER

AND THE SPIRIT OF THE NAVY

THERE is, I believe, a letter in existence written by Lord (then Sir John) Fisher in 1905, which may go down to history as one of the most remarkable forecasts on record. It contained two prophecies, both of which have been fulfilled to the letter. They were these: There would be war with Germany in 1914 and Captain Jellicoe would be the Admiralissimo. On the face of it, the prophecy looks like witchcraft. In fact, it is simply an illuminating illustration of the mind and character of the remarkable man who revolutionised the British Navy, came out of his retirement to control the instrument that he created, and has now returned to that retirement as the result of his conflict with Mr. Churchill. If we unravel the meaning of the prophecy we shall have gone far to unravel the man himself.

Let it be observed that the year in which the letter was written was 1905. That was the year in which Lord Fisher forged his bolt; it was the year of the Dreadnought. The creation of that ship was perhaps the greatest event in the naval history of the world, and it was the occasion of the fiercest controversy that ever raged in the British Navy It was the culminating challenge of "Radical Jack" to the traditions of the service. Fifty years had passed since young Fisher had left the *Victory* in Portsmouth Harbour and boarded the *Calcutta* in Plymouth Sound. (You may see the figurehead of the old *Calcutta* to-day in the grounds of his son's house near Thetford in Norfolk.)

During all that period he had made his way with

extraordinary independence of mind and directness of aim through the obstacles that lay in the path of one who had no social backing and no conventional arts. He respected nothing that was old because it was old, and feared nothing that was powerful because it was powerful. He was born with the instinct of the revolutionist, and in any sphere of life would have been the centre of upheaval. "The history of the Navy," he would say, "is the history of exploded axioms." He saw that the wonderful achievements of science since the days of Nelson had changed all the essentials of naval warfare, and with that fearless pursuit of the argument "whithersoe'r it leads," which is his characteristic, he set himself to the task of reform, reckless of personal consequences.

His natural audacity of mind is accompanied by a touch of romance and superstition not uncommon among seafaring men. This sentiment centres round the name of Nelson. His passion for Nelson is so intense and abiding that he seems to dwell in a sort of spiritual companionship with that great man, his sayings always on his lips, his ideals always in his mind. One of his objections to the first unsupported naval attack on the Dardanelles was expressed in Nelson's maxim, "Never fight a fort." It was of good omen to him that he was initiated into the navy by the last of Nelson's captains, and that he began his active life on Nelson's *Victory* and finished it on Nelson's *Victory*, and when he became First Sea Lord he deliberately delayed the assumption of office till the anniversary of Nelson's death.

He sees the finger of destiny moving through all the affairs of life, and with uplifted hand and prodigious conviction loves to quote:

> "Time, and the ocean, and some fostering star
> In high cabal have made us what we are."

I know nothing of his religious views, and fancy that even here he would say, "Ditto to Nelson," but few men quote the Bible more frequently or more appositely, and his love of sermons is notorious. He sees a divine purpose in the events that have made this little island the great adventurer of the earth, peopling its solitary places and holding the keys of its gates. "Has it occurred to you," he will say, "that there are five keys to the world, the Straits of Dover, the Straits of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, the Cape of Good Hope, the Straits of Malacca, and *that we hold them all?*"

This mystical fervour, so far from paralysing action, stimulates his mind and gives it momentum and imaginative sweep. It releases him from the ordinary modes of thought and professional ruts, and endows him with the quality of the discoverer and adventurer into strange seas. The opposition to such a man in any walk of life is always great. In the Navy, which had grown stiff with tradition, the apparition of this volcanic person was especially disquieting. He was a menace to vested interests and comfortable ways, a challenger of everything that was ancient and therefore sacred, a violent and original force bursting into the sleepy parlours of officialism. It was Lord Ripon who, on the Olympus of the Admiralty, first heard rumours of "Radical Jack," and, perhaps attracted by the name, perhaps by the fact that he had written on the science of gunnery, summoned him to Whitehall and made him Controller of the Ordnance Department. That was the beginning of the trouble for the Mandarins of the Navy. Captain Fisher had got his foot in the door, and he was not the sort of man to go away because the people inside did not want him. Nor was his the sort of personality that could ever be under-rated by a Government that appreciated energy and originality.

He returned, it is true, to sea to command the Atlantic Fleet, and later the Mediterranean Fleet; but in due course he was back again at Whitehall, this time as Second Sea Lord. And now the battle between the rebel and the old school was seriously begun. Once it seemed that the Mandarins had triumphed. Admiral Fisher retired from the Board and took his last post in the active service as Commander at Portsmouth. Partly he went there for the spiritual joy of seeing his own flag float over Nelson's ship, partly as a diplomatic retreat, *pour mieux sauter*. In any case, he was soon back at the Board, but this time on his own terms as First Sea Lord. He came with the accumulated demands of a lifetime, with a will of iron, with a ruthless disregard of persons and interests, with the spirit of a crusader breathing fire and slaughter against the old dispensation. Never was a comfortable government department swept by such a mighty wind. The attack was so impetuous, so shattering, that the enemy could not mobilise for their defence. For the assailant did not believe in attacking the foe piecemeal and so giving them time to collect their forces. He descended on them in one tumultuous and breathless assault. In two or three sensational years he had re-created the Navy. He changed the strategic disposition of the fleet, scrapped a hundred and fifty useless ships and released their men for effective service, abolished the infamous waste in warehousing, reformed the conditions of the men, opened the path for talent, gathered around him the men of brains, and bustled away the dullards and the social pets, and finally brought to birth the all-big-gun ship.

And that fact brings me back to the prophecy. Why, assuming that Sir John Fisher was right in believing that war with Germany was coming—and it is the business of the head of the Navy to believe that war is coming

somewhere at some time in order to be prepared for it should it come—why did he in 1905 predict that it would come nine years later? The reason is not really abstruse but it shows the far-seeing character of the man and the imaginative quality of his naval policy. In those exciting years of revolution in Whitehall Sir John Fisher, while fighting the *ancien régime* at home, had his eye on another and more dangerous foe abroad. Behind the duel at the Admiralty was the greater duel with Admiral von Tirpitz. It was the advent of Germany into the realm of sea power that was the true seed of the rivalry between the two countries. Sir John Fisher saw that if the challenge to the British Navy came anywhere it must come in the North Sea. That was why, following the maxim of Nelson—"Your battle ground must be your drill ground"—he changed the drill ground of the Navy from the Mediterranean to the North Sea. That was why he watched every move of the creator of the German Navy with such sleepless eyes. Most of all he watched the progress of the Kiel Canal, which was nearing completion. He saw in that great undertaking the keystone of the naval power of Germany, and he determined to neutralise it. Perhaps the building of the all-big-gun ship was an inevitable consequence of the developments of science, especially of the invention of central fire-control. I do not think that Lord Fisher would claim more than that he was the first to bring the factors together—to add up the sum of things, as it were, and to find that the answer was the Dreadnought. But in arriving at that answer he had his mind fixed, not only on the creation of a superior type of ship, but on the creation of a ship that would put the Kiel Canal, as it were, out of action for an indefinite period. The Dreadnought, in short, was not merely intended to make the German Navy a back-

number; much more it was intended to render the Kiel Canal practically useless for supreme naval purposes. Hence the secrecy and the furious haste with which, the opposition in Whitehall being finally overcome, the Dreadnought was built and launched on an astonished world. It was a trial ship, an experiment, rushed together in order to learn how to build an all-big-gun ship; but it hit von Tirpitz between wind and water. For a time he was paralysed. If he built pre-Dreadnoughts he might find that they were no match for the new type of ship; if he built the new type, Germany would have to reconstruct the Kiel Canal in order to give them passage. Sir John Fisher, watching the effect of his trump card, knew what the result must be—knew that there was no answer to the Dreadnought except the Dreadnought, knew that von Tirpitz had lost the initiative until the Kiel Canal could be reconstructed. How long would that reconstruction take? It could not be done before 1914. Then Germany could not risk a naval war until 1914.

Nor is the basis of the other prophecy less illuminating. The opposition that the revolutionist encountered at the Admiralty was not only due to the fact that he was no respecter of conventional ways; it was due even more to the fact that he was no respecter of persons. He was merciless with the incompetent, no matter how powerful their social connections might be, no matter how clear their claim to advancement on the ground of routine. He applied the doctrine of " Favouritism "—favouritism not for persons, but for capacity—with a defiant candour that sent a shudder through the service. Whenever he saw capacity he seized on it, whenever he saw incapacity he brushed it aside. Did those upon whom the swift lightnings of his wrath fall demand a court-martial? No. What was a court-martial but a means of getting old

friends to whitewash you and to say that nothing was wrong when perhaps they knew that everything was wrong? If a man had shown that he could not be trusted there was nothing to do but not to trust him. Personal considerations could not be allowed to imperil the national safety. Never since the days when Napoleon made the sons of innkeepers and coopers Field-Marshals of France was there such a clear field for the man of original genius. And among the young men of genius whom Sir John Fisher had singled out there was none of more conspicuous promise than Captain Jellicoe. He had discovered him when he himself was Controller of Ordnance, and when he returned to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord he brought Captain Jellicoe to his old department. It was not his "turn"; but what of that? If it was not his "turn" he must be taken out of his turn. There was no time to be lost. Nine years hence the Kiel Canal would be finished. Nine years hence the fate of England might hang upon one man. He was satisfied that that man must be Jellicoe. Those who in the interval have followed events in the Navy closely know how the fulfilment of the prophecy has been brought about. Perhaps only the courage of Mr. Churchill could have carried through the rapid shufflings of men and officers necessary to accomplish the object. It was accomplished at the last moment. As the hour struck Jellicoe appeared as the Admiralissimo of the Fleet.

It is not improbable that there was another prophecy that Sir John Fisher could have made in 1905 had he been probed. He knew that when the war came about it would, in spite of his age, be he who would have to control the great machine that he had created. The call was delayed, but few doubted that it would have to come. And, equally, few contrasting the events of the

first three months of the war with what happened after his return will under-estimate the immense importance of his recall upon the course of the war. There had been grave mistakes which had led to grave disasters. The sinking of the three cruisers by a submarine, the defeat off the coast of Chili, the long licence accorded to the *Emden*, the escape of the *Goeben*, had disturbed the public mind. There was no doubt about the instrument but there was disquiet about the way in which it was being used. Then came Lord Fisher and the release of his greyhounds. "What is the use of setting a tortoise to catch a hare? What did the Almighty give the greyhound long legs for?" he said with that whimsical fancy in which he loves to dress his thought. Within a month the battle of the Falkland Islands had swept the German Navy from the seas, and had established in the popular mind, as nothing else had done, the overwhelming supremacy of the British Fleet. The failure of Germany on land had been only relative: her failure at sea had been absolute. There had been a disposition in the public mind until then to overlook the magnitude of that failure. This was very natural. We are impressed by visible results and ignore the much more important invisible results. The achievements of the *Emden* had that dramatic quality which arrests the popular mind and had assumed an importance which had no relation to realities. They made exciting reading in the newspapers, and gave people who do not think an easy subject for their fears about the Navy.

And all the time one of the most wonderful things in history was happening with hardly a word of comment in the Press or of remark from the public. The whole mercantile marine of Germany was vanishing from the seas. There is to-day on all the waters of the earth not

a trading ship to be seen carrying the German or Austrian flag. The shipping industry of Germany is dead. Its vessels have either been captured and sold or interned in foreign ports, or lie useless hulks in the harbours of Hamburg and Bremen. Still more wonderful, millions of British soldiers have been carried to and fro across the English Channel without the loss of a single life. The North Sea is almost as inviolate as the Serpentine. Ten months have passed and not a German soldier has landed on our shores. The spectacular raid to Yarmouth and the futile raid on Scarborough and Hartlepool only served to show the inability of the German fleet to make a real offensive stroke against this country.

These invisible victories of the Fleet are the realities of warfare. They are destroying Germany without a shot being fired. "You take my life," said Shylock, "when you do take the means whereby I live." And it is the means whereby she lives that the British Navy is taking from Germany. For an example, take rubber. It is an essential in modern warfare and the Navy has taken it from her. The price of rubber to-day in London is about 2s. a lb.; in Hamburg, I understand, it is 18s. Or oil. The Navy has just taken Basra in the Persian Gulf from the Turks. The man in the street has not remarked the fact. Yet Basra is the port for the Persian oilfield. Its capture means that while Germany is without external supplies of oil we are assured of an abundant supply from the Persian oilfields of which the British Government is the principal owner.

Meanwhile the German Grand Fleet lies idle in its harbours. Twice it has stolen out like a burglar at night and fled back with the dawn at the first hint of the arrival of the policeman. Once it was badly mauled and since then it has been "silent as a painted ship upon a painted ocean." It is not for us to complain if von

Tirpitz yields us the fruits of victory without asking us for the sacrifices of victory. But it is not difficult to conceive the profound disappointment of Germany at his failure to challenge our supremacy at sea. The German navy was the peculiar pride of the Kaiser. As Frederick the Great had taught Prussia to march, so the Kaiser's ambition was to teach it to swim. And at the end of ten months of war there is not a square mile of the high seas where the German Fleet has dared to sail free and defiant.

This is the great, outstanding fact of the struggle. The German war machine on land has come to grief, but it is still formidable. The German war machine at sea is locked up in an ignoble fear. It may be that the war came too suddenly for von Tirpitz to carry out his strategy. There is reason to believe that the war lords forced the pace without regard to the interests of the Navy, and that von Tirpitz was sacrificed to the need of rushing events on land. It is an interesting matter for speculation as to what would have happened if the German Admiralissimo, instead of keeping his great fleet intact, had distributed a considerable portion of it over the oceans of the world before the outbreak of war for the purpose of commerce destruction. It would have meant of course heavy losses to the German Navy; but it could hardly have failed to produce important material results and hardly less important moral results. It would have been a serious challenge in the eyes of the world to our mastery of the seas, it would have gravely interfered for a time with our overseas trade, and it would certainly have given the Germans a run for their money. The ships would have been rounded up in the end; but the interruption they would have caused to our trade would have been serious, and the anxiety felt about the trivial episodes of the *Emden*

show how severe a blow such an aggressive policy would have struck at our confidence.

The timid policy adopted by von Tirpitz, whether it was his choice or whether it was thrust on him by the rapid movement of events, has been a disastrous failure. His fleet is in being—and in hiding—but the seas are ours. The policy of "attrition" is wrong for the weaker Power. Any chess player will understand that. It is the player who has the superiority in "pieces" who can best afford to play the game of attrition. What has been the result of that game so far? The British Navy has not only had all the fruits of victory, but it is to-day in a relatively stronger position than it was on the day that war was declared owing to the enormously superior power of this country in regard to building. We, in a word, both eat the cake and have it.

But the failure of German tactics, after all, is only a tribute to British supremacy. For a dozen years two men have been measuring themselves against each other at sea and the war has brought their relative genius to the test. In all this vast conflict there is only one real personal wrestle. It is that between Lord Fisher and von Tirpitz. They have watched each other's moves for years, the one grimly and studiously, after the Prussian manner, the other with sardonic gaiety after a manner for which I know no parallel. Von Tirpitz has failed, not only because he had the harder task, but because he has a heavier, more mechanical mind. His evolutions are enclosed by the large sweep and range of the other's imagination. Von Tirpitz is governed by the thing that is discovered: Fisher is the discoverer, the man of free, adventurous mind, the great empiric of the sea. He saw that naval thought was sterilised by traditions of the past which had no relevance to new facts and, having no respect for authority,

he made, as we have seen, a revolution. In that revolution von Tirpitz was always panting in his wake—an industrious, painstaking man trying to catch the lightnings. The two illustrated in a very striking way the characteristics of the rival nations, the imaginative swiftness of the one, the pedestrian thoroughness of the other. In the intellectual contests at the Mermaid Tavern it was said that the quick mind of Shakespeare played around the ponderous Ben Jonson like an English frigate around a Spanish galleon. That analogy might be applied to the intellectual relations of England and Germany. I remember standing in the museum of engineering at Munich before a Bessemer plant. "There," said the German who was showing me round, "there is one of the inventions we owe to you. Your people have the imagination to discover; but we have the patience to perfect and apply." In the contest between Lord Fisher and von Tirpitz, the Englishman not only had the superior imagination but at least an equal quality of industrious application of means to ends. That deadly blow at the Kiel Canal which he struck by inventing the Dreadnought did not end with the complete dislocation of von Tirpitz's plans. Its effects went deeper than that. They permanently lowered the quality of the German competition in shipbuilding. For a year von Tirpitz, paralysed by the new turn of events, stopped all big-ship construction, and when in feverish haste he laid down eight Dreadnoughts he laid them down from plans for which Germany had paid a great sum, but which Lord Fisher would doubtless have been glad to give to von Tirpitz for nothing, for they were already obsolete.

It was this break with the past, carried out so swiftly and silently, that gave the British Navy such an overwhelming advantage, not so much in the number of

Dreadnoughts as in their quality, for while Germany was laying down large numbers of ships on an inferior model, we were able to correct the discovered defects of each ship in its successor.

As to the wisdom of the change, there was no doubt after the battle off the Falkland Islands. The great principles which Lord Fisher applied in the Dreadnought were the uniformity of calibre in the guns, and the union of striking power and high speed. The latter principle has been perhaps the most important of his many contributions to the philosophy of naval warfare. In the old days the cruiser was the vision of the Navy, but not its striking power. The battleship had power but not speed. Lord Fisher saw that to unite the two elements in one ship would much more than double its value, and I think I am revealing no secret in saying that he himself would have built nothing but Dreadnought cruisers. But he had to yield something to the powerful opponents who stood for the old traditions and warred against the ravages of his formidable broom. And so we had the Dreadnought battleship, the single calibre ship with an inferior speed but heavier armour, and the Dreadnought cruiser, the single calibre ship with the maximum speed. It will be found, I think, that the battle off the Falkland Islands bears testimony to the wisdom of the battle cruiser which can not only throw the heaviest projectile the farthest distance but has the speed of the greyhound. It will show also, I think, the far-seeing strategy which came back to the Admiralty when Lord Fisher resumed the control of the great instrument that he forged during the sensational years when he was First Sea Lord.

There was one man, we may be sure, who saw the announcement of Lord Fisher's return to the Admiralty with a sad heart and, later, the news of his retirement

with satisfaction. It was Admiral von Tirpitz. Perhaps it ought to have been apparent from the beginning that the Admiralty could not accommodate two such masterful personalities as Mr. Churchill and Lord Fisher. Neither of them has the gift of subordinating himself, and though in time of peace it might be possible for them to observe the true limits of their authority, there was little likelihood of that being the case in time of war, when the political and strategic motives were inevitably complicated. The collision came with the proposal to attack the Dardanelles. Here the political and military motives were brought into sharp conflict. The value of a successful attack on the Dardanelles and the fall of Constantinople was obvious. It would have far-reaching influence in the Balkans, it would release the commerce of the Black Sea, it would greatly strengthen the arm of Russia and its moral effect on Germany would be incalculable. On the other hand, of course, its failure would be a disaster to the Allies of the gravest character.

Lord Fisher and Mr. Churchill approached the problem from entirely opposite convictions. The one would have no political complications with the operations of the Navy. Germany was to be beaten in the North Sea or nowhere, and any weakening of power in the supreme theatre of action was inadmissible on any political calculation. In any case an unsupported naval attack on the Dardanelles was impracticable. To be effective the way must be cleared by land operations. The objections were over-ruled. Mr. Churchill, with whom Mr. Balfour as a member of the War Council was working at the Admiralty, carried the decision. No doubt his case was strengthened by the confident assurance that Greece would join the Allies and render valuable aid in the attack. But at the critical moment M. Venizelos fell, and the adventure was launched on a purely

naval basis. The result was disaster. The defences of the Dardanelles were found to be impenetrable by sea, and the disaster of March 18th ended the first phase of the operations.

But the attack once begun could not be abandoned without serious political consequences, and the second phase was entered on on a dual basis, the initiative being taken by land and the Navy only acting as support. The difference at the Admiralty, however, was not removed, and it reappeared in an aggravated form in relation to the use of the Navy in the Straits. Finally, Lord Fisher tendered his resignation. The incident coincided with the "shell" episode, and Mr. Asquith resolved on the reconstruction of the Cabinet. The original conception of the new Ministry left Mr. Churchill unprovided with office and placed Mr. Balfour at the Admiralty; but in a few hours, through the intervention of Mr. Balfour himself, room was made for the return of Mr. Churchill as Chancellor of the Duchy. Lord Fisher, however, insisted on the elimination of Mr. Churchill as the condition of the withdrawal of his resignation, and as that condition was not fulfilled he disappeared. Mr. Churchill had won. Lord Fisher had gone, and the only change in the political control of the Navy was that instead of Mr. Churchill being at the Admiralty with Mr. Balfour as his assistant, Mr. Balfour was at the Admiralty with Mr. Churchill as a colleague in the cabinet. There had been a shuffle of places, but nothing more.

It was an unhappy close to the most remarkable naval career since Nelson fell at Trafalgar. But the work Lord Fisher had done remained and though the instrument on which the security of the country depended had passed out of his hand it was still the instrument of his creation.

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